

**AMPLIFYING VOICES OF DEVELOPMENT:
INSIGHTS FROM INDIGENOUS MAYA LEADERS OF EL QUICHÉ,
GUATEMALA**

by

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Abstract

The concept of development is under immense scrutiny. By questioning “what is development and development for whom?” a re-thinking of these practices is underway throughout the world (Abell, 1999; Escobar, 2004; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004). Critical development practitioners are seriously evaluating ‘development’ to better understand the divided views between the North and South from a richly interdisciplinary perspective (Allen, 2003; Desai & Potter, 2002; Power, 2003). In my thesis, I present findings of a recent research project in which I sought the perspectives of eight Indigenous Maya leaders of El Quiché, Guatemala. Based on interviews conducted in September 2010 in the Guatemalan highland city of Santa Cruz del Quiché and surrounding area, I attempt to better understand the meaning(s) of the word development from an Indigenous perspective, and how a self-determined vision of life best suits local communities. Based on their lived experiences, the Indigenous Maya interviewees asserted that ‘development’ practices prescribed by the local government and country’s elites, as well as outside non-government organizations and multinational corporations, are not in the best interests of the Indigenous population.

I attempt to highlight how the imposition of the ‘development’ itself has become, to these leaders, synonymous with forms of racism, inequality, exclusion, oppression and a loss of Indigenous identity and culture. Rather, Maya leaders in El Quiché stress the right to self-determined development, cultural preservation and a more holistic vision of life for individuals and communities.

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List of Acronyms

ADISMI – Association for the Integral Development in San Miguel Ixtahuacán

ADIVIMA – Association For the Integral Development of the Victims of Violence in the Verapaces, Maya Achi

CAFTA – Central American Free Trade Agreement

CCDA – Comité Campesino del Altiplano/ Campesino Committee of the Highlands

CEH – Comission for Historical Clarification

CGN - Compañía Guatemalteca de Níquel

COPAE – Guatemalan Pastoral Commission on Peace and Ecology

EPICA – Ecumenical Program on Central America and the Caribbean

FDI – Foreign Direct Investment

GAD – Gender and Development

GHRC – Guatemalan Human Rights Commission/U.S.A.

GMO – Genetically Modified Organisms

GNP – Gross National Product

HDI – Human Development Index

IDB – Inter-American Development Bank

IFC – International Finance Corporation

ILO – International Labour Organization

IMF – International Monetary Fund

INCO – International Nickel Company

INTS – International Studies Program

NAFTA – North American Free Trade Agreement

NGO – Non-Government Organization

NIC – Newly Industrialized Country

NISGUA – Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala

PAC – Civil Patrols

PBI – Peace Brigades International

REB – Research Ethics Board

REMHI – Recovery of Historical Memory Project

SAP – Structural Adjustment Program

UFCo – United Fruit Company

UN – United Nations

UNBC – University of Northern British Columbia

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

WAD – Women and Development

WID – Women in Development

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I wish to recognize the people and the organizations that have made this thesis possible. First and foremost, I want to acknowledge the strength and spirit of the Indigenous Maya of Guatemala. Interview participants and community members of El Quiché expressed warmth and kindness to me, demonstrating the beauty of the Maya people. Their testimonies motivate me to continue forward in solidarity with groups marginalized by mainstream development.

I owe much of my understanding of the historical and contemporary Guatemalan landscapes to the Reverend Emilie Smith. Her knowledge of life in Guatemala captures a lived-experience few outsiders can parallel. Above all, her passion for living inspires everyone around her to treat each day as a new adventure.

Without Grahame Russell of Rights Action, my appreciation of the depths of development would be incomplete. I extend my respect and gratitude to our “Tiny Dancer” who marched the delegation across Guatemala.

As well, I am thankful for photographer James Rodríguez, who has generously donated the use of his photos in this thesis. James’ images shape my dreams of Guatemala while I am based in Canada.

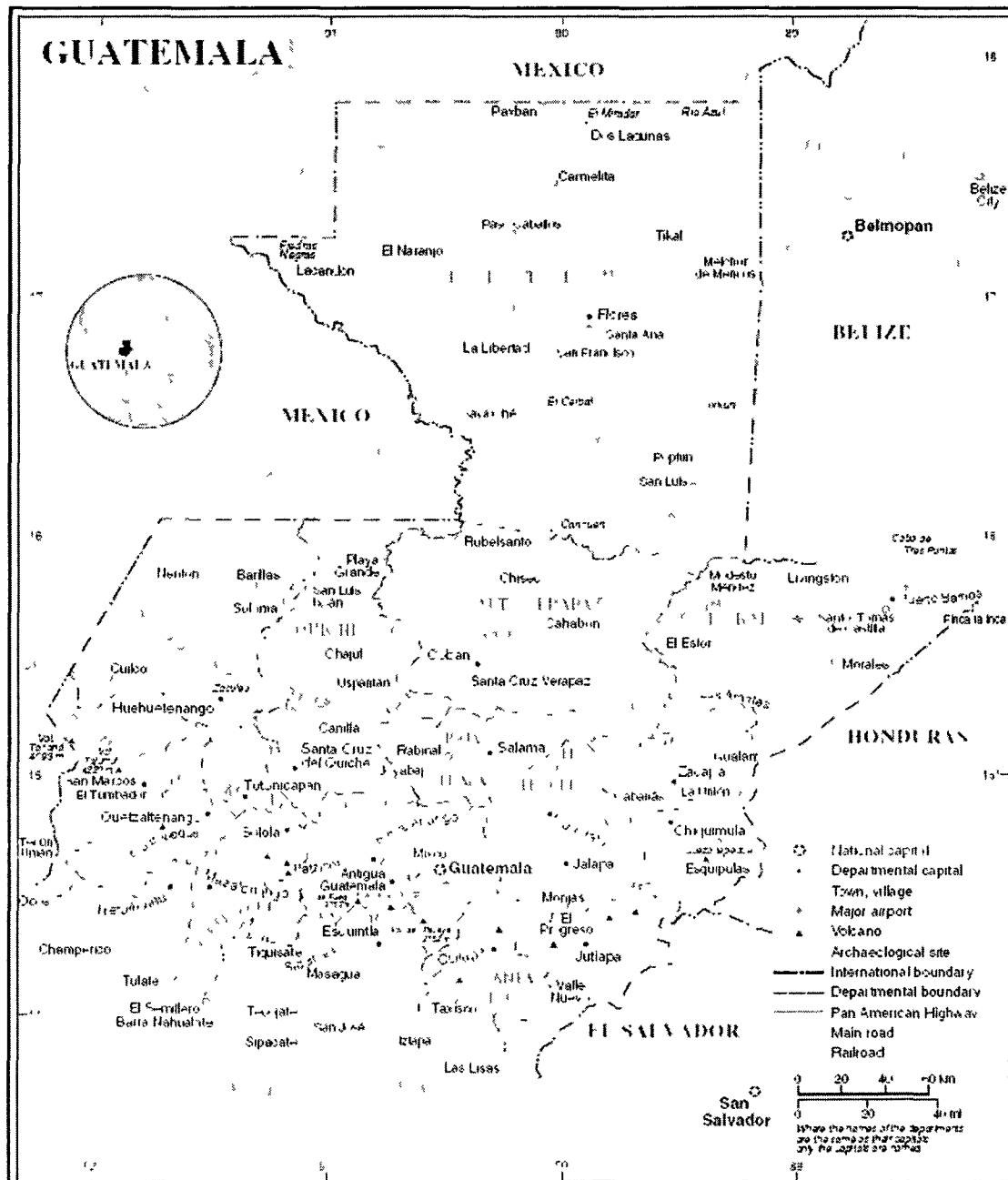
I am grateful to my committee members, Dr. Fiona MacPhail and Dr. Angèle Smith, who have championed for my success, provided vast expanses of knowledge and above all left an open door for all of my questions. I am proud to be one of your students.

I will never forget the day when my supervisor, Dr. Catherine Nolin, directed a question at me while the Guatemala 2010 Delegation bounced around in the back of a pickup truck. That day was memorable for many reasons, but to me, it was the beginning of this thesis. Dr. Nolin’s commitment to her research is matched only by her support for her students. I am forever grateful for your infamous red pen edits and our meetings over Guatemalan coffee following the “Nolin Trauma Tour.” It is an honour to be your student.

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Muchas gracias to everyone for being a part of my academic and personal journey.



Map Guatemala

Source: Zonu, 2004. Retrieved March 18, 2011, from www.zonu.com/impapa/imochapin/images/Mapa_Politico_Guatemala_2.jpg.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

My knowledge of development was bound by my textbooks before entering the International Studies Program at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC). I spent the majority of my undergraduate degree pursuing development theories of economic interest and analyzing top down policy initiatives. In short, my mind was molded to fit the dominant development perspectives. Upon my acceptance at UNBC, I initially engaged in a thesis topic that expanded on my preliminary learning. I was content to read academic work and analyze other practitioner's findings from my desk. I never intended to leave my office, nor see the practice of development first hand. It was not until I was invited to participate on the Guatemala 2010 Field School that my academic interests changed and my 'unlearning' began (Power, 2003).

Prior to my Field School experiences, the word Guatemala did not affect me. I had little interest in the country beyond statistics provided by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). If Guatemala was brought up in class, my mind would wander to pictures of volcanoes, coffee, bananas and vibrant textiles, but my reflections regarding the contemporary aspects of the country had very little impact on me. The thought of Guatemala made me feel indifferent, disinterested and emotionless. At that time, if I wanted to know anything about the country, I was content with the data provided by institutions. These organizations know what it means to be 'developed.'

It is difficult to understand what drew me to participate in the Guatemala Field School held in May 2010. I understood the world as it was laid out in my textbooks and

their pages did not suggest I go out and experience the world first hand. Surely, the authors who had penned these books know what development is and, as a result, I was content with continuing my academic career from my office. Yet, something was calling me to experience the world with my own senses. Before I knew it, I was preparing for an experience that changed my personal and academic life. I now reflect on a question Dr. W. George Lovell (2000, p. x) once asked: “[d]id I choose Guatemala or did Guatemala choose me?” Truthfully, I may never know.

Dr. Catherine Nolin designed the Guatemala Field School to include classroom components with the intent of immersing students into a world few have come to know. Immediately, I was introduced to the revolutionary and historical aspects of Central America (Argueta, 1983; Fagen, 1987; Galeano, 1974; Kirkpatrick, 1979; LaFeber, 1984a, 1984b), the historical contexts of violence and its impacts in Guatemala (Campaign for Peace and Life in Guatemala, 1999a, 1999b; Green, 2004; Nolin Hanlon & Shankar, 2000; REMHI, 1999), rights and social justice (Caceras, 2000; Manz, 2008; Robinson, 1998; Roth 2004), the methodology of horror and victims of conflict (Burnett, 2006; Doyle, 1999; Taylor, 2007; REMHI, 1999; Zur, 1994) and the contemporary manifestations of political violence (Atwood, 2008; EPICA, 1998a; Hayner, 1998; Ogle, 1998; Ross, 2004; Sanford, 2008).¹ I soaked in all the information I could, hoping it would soften the impact of the encounters I would have upon my arrival to Guatemala. While the seminar prepared me for a greater understanding of the history of the country,

¹ Dr. Catherine Nolin's course, *Geographies of Culture, Rights and Power: Perspectives on Political and Economic Violence in Mesoamerica* (GEOG 626 & 426/GEOG 333), is offered most years at UNBC and always runs in preparation for students attending the Field School. The seminar examines geographical approaches to culture, power and identity and their relationship with political violence experienced by the Indigenous Maya. Students also explore social movements and labour organizations in Guatemala's past and contemporary landscapes.

there was no possible way I could have primed myself for what I encountered on the delegation. Moreover, I was unprepared for the transformative learning with which I came face to face.

Within seventeen days of the Guatemala 2010 Field School, much of what I knew academically about mainstream development was wrong, disproven or questionable. As a student in the International Studies Master's program, I am humbled by the lived experiences of 'development'² the delegation encountered. Moreover, I felt my undergraduate degree guided me down a path of prescribed development practices that, on paper fit all but in practice fit none. As a result, interpretations of development through lived experiences were strange to me. I learned in the classroom that development meant following well proven economic models that allow a 'trickle down' to communities and provide overall prosperity.³ John Abell (1999, p. 40) suggests that, "such policies, implemented by the rich and powerful, assume a textbook world in which producers and consumers operate at arms length, negotiating until a price and quantity are determined that clear the market and benefit both parties to the transaction." I was taught this version of classical economics, where growth equals exports outweighing imports. Such expansions equate to positive improvements in healthcare, education, equality, free trade and of course political stability. While driving across the country, I saw vast

² Throughout this thesis, I refer to the word development in multiple ways. When I use the word 'development,' in single parenthesis, I am referring to the current mainstream neoliberal economic model that is called development. However, I argue this form of 'development' has not benefited everyone equally. I use development neutrally when referring to theories, terminology and in direct quotes by participants unless otherwise stated. Furthermore, I will use single parentheses on words such as 'develop,' 'developing' and 'underdeveloped' when referring to terminology that I feel is applied inappropriately by the Global North to areas of the Global South.

³ During my Graduate studies coursework at UNBC, I was encouraged by Dr. Fiona MacPhail and Dr. Paul Bowles to read the works of scholars (Angeles, 2004, Paipart & Veltmeyer, 2004, Rist 1999) who are critical of the "growth model of development." I wish to acknowledge that I was supported by Dr. MacPhail and Dr. Bowles to analyze and value both mainstream and critical perspectives. In this thesis I am mainly discussing my exposure to mainstream issues from my Undergraduate experience.

landscapes covered in bananas, coffee, sugarcane, African palm and cardamom, as well as resource extractive industries pulling minerals from the earth. This type of ‘development’ is interpreted by many textbooks as ‘progress’ (Thomas, 2000b).

Our esteemed colleague Grahame Russell of Rights Action (personal communication, May 13, 2010) carefully explained how the economic model designed in the North is applied in the Global South. He describes how Guatemala has enough land to feed the population three times over, and yet, the small elite class holds almost all of the fertile land for use in exports. Export crops leave a vast majority of the population malnourished, starving and dying. This “begs the question about free trade, free trade for whom? Not free for the Guatemalan people. [The] current economic model doesn’t work” (Russell, personal communication, May 13, 2010).

After participating in translated conversations and experiencing community development aspirations around Guatemala, I was left to consider “what is development and development for whom?” My education continued throughout the delegation. In Quixaya, the Comité Campesino del Altiplano (CCDA) explained that ‘good’ development means challenging existing models with rural sustainability, agrarian reform, decent work and community empowerment (Leocadio Huracán, personal communication, May 13, 2010). In San Marcos, the Pastoral Commission for Peace and Ecology (COPAE) taught me that ‘development’ is seen as a broken promise not kept by the mining companies that moved onto their land (Vinicio López, personal communication, May 15, 2010). From the Association for Integral Development in San Miguel Ixtahuacán (ADISMI), I witnessed development as a means of grassroots resistance against resource extraction corporations to ensure the health, safety and rights

of the Maya people (ADISMI, personal communication, May 15, 2010) Finally in Rabinal, the Association for the Integral Development of the Victims of Violence in the Verapaces (ADIVIMA) taught the delegation that development means justice, respect for human rights and rehabilitation of communities (Júan de Díos García, personal communication, May 21, 2010) Each organization has different views of what development entails, but all are working successfully towards communal visions of self-determined development ⁴

I began to compare the ideals of grassroots initiatives with traditional models of ‘development’ expressed through international organizations and resource extraction companies in Guatemala Outside of El Estor, ‘development’ caused the families of La Paz to lose their homes and land (La Paz, community visit/meeting, May 20, 2010) In Lote Ocho, the same model triggered the burning of homes, the raping of women, the loss of unborn children, the destruction of crops and the violation of numerous other human rights (Lote Ocho, community visit/meeting, May 19, 2010) Outside of Panzós, ‘development’ from the Global North forced the community of *Bella Flor* or “beautiful flower” off their land and subjected the population to near starvation in the process (Bella Flor, community visit/meeting, May 20, 2010) Around San Miguel Ixtahuacán, ‘development’ causes cracked homes, sick children, divided communities and the persecution of young mothers and men who stand in the way of ‘progress’ (ADISMI, personal communication, May 15, 2010) I struggled to hold onto the knowledge of my

⁴ In this thesis “self-determined development” or “a self-determined vision of life” is understood as an alternative to mainstream ‘development’ This term implies a development defined by Indigenous or marginalized people that lead to the protection of minority and cultural rights as well as autonomy from Northern visions of neoliberal economic ‘development’ (Warren, 1998)

textbooks, but in the end, I could no longer advocate for a model of 'development' that led to such outcomes

Before my initial delegation to Guatemala, my research was based on the inquiry of secondary data, exploring the economic development models and the most recent global economic crisis. On the flight home, I recalled a chapter that I read in two of Dr Catherine Nolin's classes, written by anthropologist Ruth Behar (1996). Initially, I did not understand why Dr Nolin included this piece, but while en route back to Canada its purpose became clear. Ruth Behar (1996, p. 177) said, "[c]all it sentimental, call it Victorian and nineteenth century, but I say that anthropology that doesn't break your heart just isn't worth doing." I never had a connection with my previous research, but now I found passion with a subject that brought meaning to my studies. Connection with my research unites me with practices associated in the fields of anthropology, sociology, ethnography and geography. I feel this connection should be embraced by all disciplines and international studies in particular. For me, there is no going back. The Field School allowed me to witness marginalized people being 'developed,' and listen to the marginalized voices that have been predominantly ignored by the Northern development.⁵ Guatemala tells the lived-experience of the Indigenous Maya who have been ignored for their alternative visions of life, and instead acknowledged as "terrorists" (Bastos, 2010) for resisting dominant strategies applied by the Global North. The Field

⁵ In this thesis "Northern development" is understood as contemporary neoliberal economic visions of 'development'. This consists of any governments (including the Guatemalan government), ruling elites, international organizations or non-governmental organizations that promote the goals of 'development' through growth as a strategy of marketization, export-oriented trade, resource extraction, and visions of 'development' that do not include consultation with Indigenous people (Escobar, 1995; Rist, 1999; Thomas, 2000a). I also use the term "imposed development" when describing a 'development' that is implemented by the Global North without consultation of recipients in the Global South in the form of policy, programs or projects. This thesis does not homogenize the "North." I recognize there are alternative visions of development represented by the Global North that advance Indigenous and post-development perspectives as well as a variety of other forms of resistance to neoliberal economic 'development'.

School furthered my understanding a self-determined vision of life and social justice for the Indigenous population of Guatemala.

Guatemala changed my outlook on the world. I am fortunate to have the support of friends, family and my committee to pursue my new interests. Within two months of returning to Canada, I designed a new thesis proposal and was ready to return to Guatemala in pursuit of my academic ambitions. Re-thinking 'development' is my passion and engaging in fieldwork has given me a greater understanding of the world than any textbook could provide.

'Unlearning'

My 'unlearning' of 'development' is sustained by authors such as Arturo Escobar (1995), Eduardo Galeano (1974), Marcus Power (2003) and Wolfgang Sachs (1992). Each presents arguments enlightening the views of 'development' through those being 'developed.' My initial interpretation of development is synonymous with a deadly illness plaguing the Global South, just as Michel Foucault (Foucault cited in Escobar 1995, p. 102) explains:

Since disease can be cured only if others intervene with their knowledge, their resources, their pity, since a patient can be cured only in society, it is just that the illness of others.... What is benevolence towards the poor is transformed into knowledge that is applicable to the rich.

Development is an ailment created by the Global North, with only wealth and policies to provide relief. As a result, countries considered to be 'developing' must adhere to prescriptions enforced by those who are 'developed.' While development practitioners search for this cure, larger questions have taken shape. In a divided world these queries are: What is development, and development for whom?

It is clear to me, after completing the UNBC 2010 Guatemala Field School, that there is need for a greater evaluation of development practices. I began re-thinking the ‘development’ processes of the past six decades under the watchful eyes of Dr. Catherine Nolin. Through Dr. Nolin’s leadership, I witnessed firsthand how Guatemala is plagued with ‘development’ from a Northern perspective, without consultation with recipients in the South. As an International Studies student, I explore these observations further as they present a rejection of many perspectives I obtained from textbooks and lectures during my Undergraduate studies. Guatemala provides a complex, yet concrete example of a country that is plagued with initiatives of ‘development’ that have yet to meet the needs of the country’s Indigenous population. The Maya⁶ have endured waves of ‘development’ for centuries (Lovell, 1988, 2000), yet the state ranks only 122 out of 182 countries on the United Nation’s Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP, 2009).

Development is comprehensively linked to landscapes of power. The ability of ‘the West’ to define the existence of ‘the Non-West’ is standard among development practices, and places global divisions of the world as historical rather than a geographical construction (Power, 2003, p. 99). Stuart Hill (cited in Power, 2003, p. 99) said that ‘the West’ has the power to classify areas of the world as ‘Non-West,’ create images and ideas that constitute the goals of development, create a standard model of comparison and provide a criteria of evaluation in which all other societies are judged against. Escobar (1995, p. 78-79) agrees, and articulates that:

[i]n this discourse, the traditional segment is a world of economic darkness, where new ideas are impossible, architecture is inadequate ... and there are no communications ... in

⁶ I use the term “Maya,” opposed to “Mayan,” in this thesis. According to Laura Martin (2005, para. 4), “[t]he corresponding Spanish term has always been simply [M]aya for both noun and adjective.” I use the term Maya to reflect the identification used by each interview participant as well as scholars in the Pan-Maya Renaissance (Martin, 2005).

short, another planet. It does not matter that those aliens are human beings as well ... or that they constitute about 80 percent of the world. Their existence is brushed aside, because they live in quite another age bound to be swept away by the fruits of Enlightenment and the travails of economists. The rightness of the actions of the harbingers of modernity is corroborated by the fact that the native elite cherishes the modern world – even if their native side might pop up from time to time, for instance, when they become ‘corrupt’ or ‘uncooperative.’

The West divided the world into areas deemed ‘underdeveloped,’ ‘traditional’ and ‘backwards’ to separate countries that are successful economically from states that are considered unsuccessful (Dodds 2002; Escobar, 1988, 1995; Esteva , 1992; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004; Petras & Veltmeyer, 2001; Rapley, 2002). Thus, countries of the Global South are denied the ability to define their own standards of development and ways of living. This evaluation of power relations is endorsed by Michel Foucault (cited in Power, 2003, p. 5) whose effort to explain power and its social reality have been echoed in Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1979) and by others as a method of re-thinking and unlearning within ‘development’ practices.

The Indigenous population of Guatemala struggles towards a self-determined vision of development. Guatemala is a place dominated by culture, rights and power and I intend to provide an academic forum for the vision of the Maya to be heard. I aim to critically reflect on both Northern and Southern perspectives of development, to allow my main thesis questions to be evaluated.

Research Questions and Objectives – Development for Whom?

I listened to concerns voiced by the Indigenous Maya population in the department of El Quiché while participating in the UNBC 2010 Guatemala Field School. ‘Development’ is a concept that the Maya encounter regularly, but their experience seems

vastly different than the development I studied. Delegation leaders, Dr. Catherine Nolin and Graeme Russell, challenged my knowledge of ‘development’ and its impacts on the Global South. Personal experiences, coupled with numerous other encounters on the Field School, allowed me to define key questions to outline my research upon my return to Guatemala in August of 2010. These questions are the foundation of a sequence of sub-questions created for interviews with Indigenous Maya leaders.

1. What is development and development for whom?
2. How is the Northern vision of ‘development’ perceived by the Indigenous Maya population of El Quiché?
3. Is there a self-determined vision of life held by communities in Guatemala?

These questions provide the foundation for my fieldwork in Guatemala, as well as my participatory experiences of critical development studies. To capture alternative perceptions and perspectives I embrace “[t]estimonial literature” as the outcome of a valid research method to express “a collective experience and resist Western obsessions with individuality” (Nolin Hanlon & Shankar, 2000, p. 267). I aspire to listen to those who are being ‘developed’ and the voices of those who are not represented in mainstream development approaches. I aim to understand the need for a self-determined development from those who struggle living a vision of ‘development’ that does not reflect the Maya way of life or allow for social justice. The answers to each question fill gaps in mainstream development literature and strengthen the strategies of those resisting development from the Global North. Furthermore, my questions are inquires rarely asked

by practitioners of mainstream development. I aim to amplify⁷ the voices of participants to further challenge the dominant discourse.

Approach

International development is an interdisciplinary sphere informed by many longstanding fields of study (Hettne, 2002). As a Master's candidate of the International Studies Program, in the specific stream of International Development, I am enlightened by critical development, feminist methodologies, ethnography and human geographical studies. Openness to multiple fields enable me to clearly illustrate the value of this research as well as produce a higher quality of academic work than if I was narrowly focused within one discipline.

My research is the foundation of my re-thinking of 'development' practices. This process is not unique, as it is shared over decades by other practitioners exemplified in my thesis by critical development thinkers (Angeles, 2004). As Power (2003, p. 16) explains, "[d]evelopment is often presented as a collective task that... appears to be justified beyond all dispute, as inherently 'good' for the people as apple pie." Written in Power's (2003) texts, the idea of 'good' development is a viewpoint expressed by those who receive the benefits of development, but neglects the perception of those being 'developed.' Practices and policies created are often done without the viewpoint of recipients of development practice (Power, 2003; Rist, 1999), which is why my approach

⁷ I began using this phrase after a discussion with the Reverend Emilie Smith. Originally, I had said I wanted to empower those who I interviewed, but the Reverend Smith explained to me, that my participants were already very empowered individuals. Instead, I was told that my time would better be served "amplifying" their voices, so that they could be heard by those who often ignore the Indigenous Maya either because they are considered 'backwards,' and/or because they stand against mainstream economic development applied by the North.

is based around re-thinking the dominant perspectives to include the visions of the Indigenous Guatemalan population.

Again, I acknowledge that re-thinking ‘development’ practices is not a new phenomenon. In fact, challenges to the dominant development ideology stem back to the 1970s with Dependency theorists and groundbreaking thinkers such as Ester Boserup (Angeles, 2004; Boserup, 1970; Escobar, 1995; Thomas, 2000a). However, ‘development’ as it is practiced today is dominated by theories of economic growth. This thesis will describe how prevailing practices do not always translate to mean ‘good’ development (Esteva, 1992; Sachs, 1992; Thomas, 2000a). Therefore, I attempt to give life to old issues in an effort to inspire others to join my pursuit of re-thinking ‘development’ and to gain further ground in the struggles of the Indigenous populations in Guatemala. Rajni Kothari (1989, p. 5) explains that if real change is to take place, “[t]here has to be a certain threshold of collective awareness, normally of a deep sense of discontent with the prevailing state of affairs” before transformations can occur. I believe those who are being ‘developed’ have reached this brink and permanent change is in the near future.

Re-thinking ‘development’ practices is approached by critical development practitioners such as Escobar (1995), Galeano (1974) and Sachs (1992) and has led to concepts of Anti-development, Post-colonialism, Post-development and others (Sidaway, 2002). Being critical of past and present ‘development’ practices will further the movement towards ensuring the rights of Indigenous peoples in the Global South, rather than the capitalist needs of governments, institutions and corporations in the North (Nederveen Pieterse, 2000; Sidaway, 2002). Development, according to Vandana Desai

and Rob Potter (2002, p. 2), cannot be equated with economic growth; instead it must be regarded as enhancing human rights and social welfare, “so that self-esteem, self-respect and improving entitlements become central concerns.” I agree, and wholeheartedly believe that development should be the pursuit of a self-determined vision of life.

Furthermore, the critical development approaches I take are necessary when re-thinking ‘development’ from the perspectives and perceptions of the Indigenous leaders in the Guatemalan highlands. Rather than solely relying on textbooks and scholars, I have explored alternative viewpoints of development, enabling me to produce a thesis that portrays the lived experience of the Quiché Maya with whom I spoke. This approach demands results for the Maya’s struggle, and invites debate over a “post-economics world” by promoting the limitation of measurable wealth as growth and the endorsement of alternative forms of development (Esteva, 1992).

Overview

My thesis is arranged into six distinct Chapters. Following this introductory Chapter, Chapter Two is designed as a literature review to cover my conceptual framework and theories of contemporary development. Chapter Three consists of the Guatemalan experience of ‘development,’ consultations and resource extraction in Guatemala and, finally, my study context of the Indigenous Maya of El Quiché. Chapter Four outlines the methodology of my thesis. Chapter Five is an analysis of fieldwork

conducted in El Quiché, Guatemala and includes Indigenous leader's perceptions⁸ of 'development.' The word 'perception' is used in Nathan Einbinder's (2010, p. 110) thesis *Dams, Displacement, and Perceptions of Development: A Case from Río Negro, Guatemala* as the divide "existing between the dominant capitalist model, and that of the Indigenous and/or marginalized people." I would argue that experiences "affect perceptions of political, socio-economic or cultural differences between world regions, peoples and places" distinguish the views of the Maya from those of mainstream development (Power, 2003, p.7). Chapter Five is the heart of my research and is synthesized into sections based on my methodological analysis of participants' responses. Finally, in Chapter Six, I combine participants' perspectives⁹ of development and visions of a self-determined way of life with my conclusions as a researcher, as well as offering a vision of life for the future.

⁸ In this thesis the word 'perception' is applied to convey how the Indigenous Maya leaders view 'development' that is applied to the Maya of Guatemala by forces outside the community. These forces include the national government, external governments, non-government organizations, international institutions, and multinational corporations. Each interview participant observes 'development' from the 'perception' of those being 'developed.' I acknowledge that forces outside of the community may perceive the impacts of 'development' differently than the Maya of El Quiché.

⁹ I have identified the 'perspective' of each interview participant as an articulated desire for a vision of life free from forces outside the community. It is the Mayas' 'perspective' of how their community could be if these visions are self-determined and expressed by the Maya and not Northern 'development.'

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Defining Development

The word development is usually described as having a positive meaning by scholars and practitioners alike. To some, it means: progress, improved living, overall health, wellbeing, increased living standards and above all economic prosperity (Thomas, 2000a, p. 23). However, as Alan Thomas articulates,

good change... combine[s] quite different ideas which can cause confusion between different senses in which the term ‘development’ is used. ‘Good’ implies a vision of desirable wellbeing... ‘Change’, on the other hand, is a process, which ‘may entail disruption’ and which may or may not be possible to direct (2000a, p. 23).

The promotion of positive transformations has been executed through policies and programs created by institutions and governments (Hewitt, 2000). Over the past six decades, the rich and powerful areas of the world have promoted this ‘good’ development but over time it has become clear that perspectives and perceptions of the term have differed across the globe. “Development has changed the face of the earth, but not in the way it had intended,” Wolfgang Sachs (1992, p. 3) states. Today I would argue that the world is ever changing, and so too are people’s awareness of the term development.

Understanding ‘development’ is a complicated process. Its history focuses on the theoretical and ideological experiences of its creators in the North. Marcus Power (2003, 1) acknowledges “that the idea of ‘development’ is difficult to define, since the term has a whole variety of meanings in different times and places... it might be said that the term actually has no clear and unequivocal meaning and is in a sense truly the stuff of myth, mystique and mirage.” Development practices have morphed and shifted to meet the

requirements of popular movements over time, both in theory and practice. Thus, it is appropriate to examine its metamorphoses in order to grasp its meaning in the research being presented and recognize that the way development is perceived throughout the world is not universal.

Mainstream ‘development’ has been critiqued throughout the decades. This is a foundation for international studies students, as past ‘development’ practices shape the world we are confronted with today, both as development practitioners and global citizens. Theories that define development periods and ideological approaches often emerge from evaluations of previous practices. Each time there has been a re-thinking of ‘development,’ it has been at the heels of perceptions of failed policies and solutions. As a result, it is important to continue the evaluation of this practice to understand the world at present, in order to create a viable future for everyone.

Mainstream ‘Development’

In this thesis I present a description of mainstream ‘development’ practices as well as critiques. I integrate theory and evaluation together to illustrate how mainstream ‘development’ has constantly been evolving and changing in reaction to analyses made by critical thinkers. The purpose of this Chapter is to introduce the goals and strategies of mainstream ‘development,’ while showing their evolution over time. I examine contemporary ‘development’ from a theoretical basis to exemplify the limitations and flaws of conventional views. In this section, I create a theoretical baseline to comprehend applications of ‘development’ practices in Guatemala in Chapter Three.

The concept of development, as it is known today, emerged at end of the Second World War. By 1945, certain areas of the world were reduced to rubble. From the dust, the victorious nations emerged together and began to rebuild the world in their own image. This specific point in history is also responsible for the great divisions that now define the “rest of the world.” The West and the East, the Global North and Global South, and the First World, Second World and the Third World were all labels given to regions of the earth in an attempt to distinguish between the advanced capitalist economies, and those considered ‘backwards’ or ‘underdeveloped’ (Dodds, 2002; Escobar, 1988; Escobar, 1995; Esteva, 1992; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004; Petras & Veltmeyer, 2001; Rapley, 2002). As Vandana Desai and Robert Potter (2002, p. 1) explain, “early views of development within the field of development studies, undoubtedly stressed catching up with, and generally imitating, the ‘West’.” Much of this vision was driven by the United States as an attempt to “rescue” countries that had recently been liberated from colonial rule, from the grips of communism (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004, p. 39).

Arturo Escobar (1988, p. 429) observes that the “great post-war transition” was most evident between 1944 and 1950. In the summer of 1944, the United States invited powerful capitalist nations to come together in an attempt to create a favourable international trading regime and construct plans to rebuild the ‘underdeveloped’ areas of the world. “To this end the Bretton Woods conference gave rise to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which became known as the World Bank” (Hewitt, 2000; Rapley, 2002, p. 5). The institutionalization of “‘development,’ as a mode of thinking and a source of practices, soon became an omnipresent reality” (Escobar, 1988, p. 430). More specifically, from

1944 onward, development was seen as a goal for the state of human existence that all other nations must strive for; to be like ‘us’ rather than like ‘them’ (Abu-Lughod, 1991; Escobar, 1995; Gupta & Ferguson, 1997a; Hettne, 2002; Power, 2003; Sachs, 1992).

During his inaugural speech in 1949, American President Harry S. Truman ushered in a new era that would later be known as the Golden Years¹⁰ (Hewitt, 2000). He declared that “greater production [was] the key to prosperity and peace” (Dodds, 2002, p. 3; Escobar 1995, p. 1) and that “old imperialism – exploration for foreign profit has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of ‘development’ based on the concepts of democratic fair dealings” (Esteva, 1992, p. 7; Thomas, 2000b). The Truman Doctrine, as it was known, created a new policy for world affairs. It was made clear through this policy that development could best be achieved if nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America followed blueprints of economic development and market enhancement designed by the North.¹¹ As a result, the preliminary post-war period was defined by active and aggressive economic ‘development’ from the Global North, which was applied to the Global South (Dodds, 2002; Escobar, 1988; Escobar, 1995; Hettne, 2002; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004; Petras & Veltmeyer, 2001; Rapley, 2002)

Developing countries were expected to industrialize by adopting Western/First World cultural and institutional practices in order to “modernize” (Hettne, 2002; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004; Rapley, 2002). Some nations were open to the ideas as it “sought to deepen their victory over colonial rule by embracing development as a national

¹⁰ The ‘Golden Years’ lasted from 1950 through the 1960s and were seen by the Global South as being prosperous for the United States, Western Europe and Japan (Hewitt, 2000). Thus, while the term may imply a positive era of ‘development’ for all, it was in fact not universal.

¹¹ The distinction between the two spheres of the world, the Global North and the Global South, is a contemporary contrast of old comparative regions like the East and the West. Practitioners divide the world by ideologies, development and later geographical location. The Global North is rationalized as being ‘developed’ while the Global South is ‘underdeveloped’. As Marcus Power (2003) argues, it is again a division of the world into positive and negative spheres of identity.

framework for building upon independence” (Power, 2003, p. 11). From a Modernization theory standpoint, the Global South was lagging behind the Global North and could only catch up if their export production greatly outweighed their imports (Rapley, 2002, p. 13).¹² In order to achieve development, large amounts of capital were first loaned on a short term basis from the IMF to the Global South as a means to support their infrastructure as well as assist in the development of multinational trade and industry (Rapley, 2002, p. 5; Rist 1997; Schrijvers, 1993).

President Truman’s 1949 speech had a powerful impact on the macroeconomic policies adopted by both the Global North and the Global South, but his effect on the social spaces of the world are often forgotten. According to Gustavo Esteva (1992), ‘underdevelopment’ was officially set in motion by the President’s address, when he categorized two billion people as ‘underdeveloped.’¹³

In a real sense, from that time on, they ceased being what they were, in all their diversity, and were transmogrified into an inverted mirror of other’s reality a mirror that belittles them and sends them off the end of the queue, a mirror that defines their identity, which is really that of a heterogeneous and diverse majority, simply in the terms of a homogenizing and narrow minority (Esteva, 1992, p. 7)

This creation of the ‘other’ has had a profound affect on populations in the Global South (Abu-Lughod, 1991; Gupta & Ferguson, 1997a) ‘Underdevelopment’ has become a

¹² Economists Raul Prebisch and Hans Singer are responsible for this equation. From their studies of First and Third World trade, they recommended that Third World countries would have to “export more of their primary commodities just to maintain their levels of imports from the First world” (Rapley, 2002, p. 13). This theory became popular after John Maynard Keynes’s macroeconomic policies had dominated economies before the 1940s. Prebisch, an Argentinean economist, critiqued Modernization theory and export-led industrialization that promoted “massive transfers of (mainly private) capital, exports of raw materials, and comparative advantage that was supposed to benefit all market traders” (Rist, 1999, p. 113).

¹³ President Truman was not the first person to use the term ‘underdevelopment.’ Esteva (1992) gives credit to Wilfried Benson, former Secretariat of the International Labour Organization (ILO), who wrote in 1942 about ‘underdeveloped areas’ in relation to the economic basis for peace. Esteva (1992) also mentions authors, Rosenstien-Rodan and Arthur Lewis as well as occasional documents from the United Nations who used the term in passing. However, the term did not become widespread until President Truman adopted it into his international policies.

relevant contribution to contemporary development, by positioning those who are considered ‘underdeveloped’ as individually irrelevant. Policies and programs hereafter were created assuming that the populations in the Global South were in fact homogenous, believing, for example, that individuals considered ‘underdeveloped’ in Asia were categorically the same as individuals in Africa (Esteva, 1992). Thus the ‘problem’ of development was seen to be easily solved with one solution, which at the time was macroeconomic change (Escobar, 1995; Power, 2003, p. 4).

Modernization theory envisioned a mass industrialization¹⁴ that would increase production activities (Thomas, 2000a). However, it was unlikely to happen quickly and greatly depended on the assistance of the Global North. The IMF, World Bank, United Nations and other bilateral agencies were designed to provide foreign aid, loans and investment in an attempt to fill the savings gaps experienced by “undeveloped” nations (Escobar, 1988, 1992a, p. 23). Intervention was deemed “necessary, due to institutional conditions which made growth in the poor areas less automatic than it was assumed to be in the so-called developed countries” (Hettne, 2002, p. 7).¹⁵ Practice based on Modernization theory emphasized capital accumulation and Gross National Product (GNP) as development indicators, but the optimism for its success weakened by the late 1960s when capital did not increase through the IMF and World Bank strategies (Esteva, 1992; Hewitt, 2000). Eventually, Modernization theory was contested by an alternative

¹⁴ According to Alan Thomas (2000a, p. 31) the process of industrialization meant the promotion of the industrial sector while the agricultural sector would become increasingly less important. Industrialization leads to economic growth and therefore economic development that would “transform many aspects of life” and push the Global South towards ‘development’.

¹⁵ Structuralism, as it was known, was seen as a movement that dominated the early phases of economic development based on Keynesian economics, which determined that the state should have control over the market (Hettne, 2002).

approach that attempted to explain the underdevelopment of the Global South (Escobar, 1995; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004; Rapley, 2002).

In the 1960s and into the 1970s, theorists began seeking justification for the widening gaps between the Global North and Global South, in response to longstanding hegemony of the Modernization approach (Munck, 1999). Dependency theory was articulated by Latin American scholars such as Fernando Cardoso, Theotonio dos Santos and André Gunder Frank, who argued that socio-economic conditions were connected with a country's position within the development sphere (Hewitt, 2000). Dependency theorists argued that underdevelopment was a result of the Global North enhancing itself with the riches of the Global South, and in turn impoverishing the South (Hewitt, 2000; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004).¹⁶ John Rapley (2002, p. 17) explains that “[i]mperialism had not exported capitalism to the third world; rather, it had drained the colonies of the resources that could have been used for investment, and had killed off local capitalism through competition.” Consequently, development theorists became divided in their visions of how countries became underdeveloped, and also the methods of development that would assist in the “catch-up” of the Global South. Lenora Angeles (2004, p. 61-62) recognizes that two schools of thought were “polarized between those who emphasized capitalist enterprise and free markets... and those who preached ideology and revolution.” Unfortunately, neither mainstream belief provided a cure for the ‘problems’ of development, nor a solution to the impasse of theory.

A well-known critique of the earliest economic models can be seen in Dudley Seers' *The Meaning of Development*, first published in 1969. He is acknowledged for

¹⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein is another prominent scholar from the 1970s created World Systems Theory to describe the dependant and abusive relationship between the core countries in the North, with the periphery countries of the South (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004).

challenging the dominant economic model because, in his eyes, it did not adequately reduce the number of poor in the world. “Seers was an economist arguing for the emphasis on human needs and equity alongside economic growth” says Thomas (2000a, p. 33; Rist, 1999). In fact, Seers’ criticisms promoted alternative perspectives of development through his realization of human potential. Again, this was in opposition to the economic Grand theory that defined the 1960s with contributions made by “the Lewis model...the Harrod-Domar ‘fundamental equation of economic growth’; Rostow’s stage theory; Leibenstein’s ‘critical minimum effort’; Rodan’s ‘big push’; Scitovsky’s externalities; Hirschman’s linkages...[and] the trade pessimism of Prebisch and Singer,” to name a few (Leeson, 1988, p. 2). However, criticisms like these became more frequent and increasingly from different areas of the world.

By the 1970s, economic development had seen mixed success and was identified by debt-led growth. There was a movement away from the ‘growth-at-all-costs’ strategy, as a way to fill the cleavages that had deepened between the Global North and Global South (Hewitt 2000). Klaus Dodds (2002, p. 5) rationalizes that:

developing countries had been shaped by a combination of circumstances... In some cases, economic development appeared to have brought unprecedented wealth and opportunity to so-called newly industrialized countries (NICs)... [other] states in sub-Saharan Africa and Central America... simply became poorer as a consequence of bitter civil wars, massive corruption, and persistent and violent intervention by the superpowers.

As areas of the Global South fell deeper into the gaps of development, activists from the Global South and North “[g]rassroots, participatory and bottom-up development” movements, argued that the solutions for ‘development’ can only be realized when those being ‘developed’ are able to participate; becoming agents rather than victims of development (Parpart & Veltmeyer 2004, p. 40). As Leonora Angeles (2004, p. 64)

notes, development concepts and practices generated from these movements later became conventional development discourse of international agencies, calling these practices new, rather than giving credit to their creators in the Global South. Notably, key components of grassroots movements, such as poverty, gender and the environment, were later adopted by organizations like the World Bank (Angeles, 2004).

Former President of the World Bank Robert McNamara recognized that a high rate of growth did not always succeed in bringing progressive development. Specifically, in 1973 McNamara said, “[t]he data suggest[s] that the decade of rapid growth has been accompanied by greater maldistribution of income in many developing countries and that the problem is more severe in the countryside” (Rist, 1999; Schrijvers, 1993, p. 11). As a result, the World Bank and the United Nations pursued anti-poverty initiatives in the Global South and also created programs that recognized the importance of women who had initially been left out of most development initiatives (Escobar, 1995). This adoption can be critiqued, according to Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2000), as an ‘add on’ to economic models, rather than an expansion of the development paradigm that had earlier been pursued by those in the Global South. However, these reforms were short lived, or at odds with the neoliberal movements of the 1980s (Angeles, 2004; Esteva, 1992).

Neoliberalism emerged during the 1980s from the development paradigm as a “counter-revolution” of the economics models used since the end of the Second World War (Hettne, 2002, p. 8; Thomas, 2000a). Again, institutions such as the World Bank¹⁷ and the IMF were used as the principal distributors of neoliberal order among nations in

¹⁷ In an attempt to adjust to criticisms of the decade, the World Bank’s *World Development Report* of 1980, attempted to change its institutional definition of the word development. “Henceforth, ‘development’ would measure the extent of participation in and integration with the world market” emphasizing the growing dominance of globalization in institutional reform (Munck, 1999, p. 199)

the Global South. Specifically, the structural adjustment programs (SAPs) designed and implemented by these institutions demanded that countries seeking their loans agree to: a “new economic model... based on the components of... a realistic rate of currency exchange... privatization of the means of production and state enterprises... deregulation of private economic activity... market reform... [and] downsizing the state apparatus” (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004, p. 45; Power, 2003; Thomas, 2000b; Toye & Toye, 2004). These programs emphasize short-term strategies, believing that long-term development will inevitably take care of itself. With the adoption of SAPs, governments of the Global South, in many ways, lost control of their countries and handed the future of their citizens to private individuals and institutions (Hewitt, 2000).

Neoliberalism is based on the disengagement of the state and the opening of the global capital markets of finance, production, consumption and marketing (Bowles, 2005; Keeling, 2004). By opening the doors of a national market, neoliberalism enabled the deepening of internationalization and the expansion of globalization (Hettne, 2002). Over time, these strategies were coined the “steps to hell” by the recipient countries, because it deepened their number of people affected by poverty and increased their national debts to developed nations and Northern institutions (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004, p. 45; Angeles, 2004; Roth, 2004). At this point in contemporary development, theorists hit what is known as the “impasse” of the development paradigms, where no Grand theory was capable of addressing the development ‘problems’ of the Global South (Angeles, 2004; Desai & Potter, 2002; Munck, 1999; Schuurman, 2002).

The decades following the neoliberal revolution brought a divided view on future development practices. Analyses brought a revival of anti-poverty policies that had taken

a backseat in the 1980s (Angeles, 2004). Particularly, Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen approached the turn of the century as a time to expand peoples' capabilities and to increase individuals' potential. The 'capabilities approach' emphasizes peoples' right to freedom; specifically the autonomy to "choose between different ways of living" (Hewitt, 2000, p. 308; Schrijvers, 1993).

Anti-poverty programs took a heavy stance against globalization and top down 'development' strategies that have dominated policies since the late 1940s. David Keeling (2004, p. 1) notes that:

[f]rom an evolving trendy perspective on socio-economic change two decades ago, globalization has become the dominant contemporary political economic framework for national development policy, as well as the focus of vociferous and rigorous criticism by those sectors of society disadvantaged, damaged, or bypassed by the forces of global change.

From the 1990s onwards, the development paradigm has seen an emergence of Anti-globalization literature. This has mainly been because globalization is seen by Anti-globalists as only enhancing capitalist states (Bowles, 2005) and therefore is practiced by many Northern governments and corporations. Anti-globalists, such as Walden Bello, are against neoliberal forms of globalization that do not focus on the market as emancipation from underdevelopment (Bowles, 2005; Escobar, 2004). Instead, they question "the epistemology of the market in the name of alternatives deriving from within and beyond the market system" (Escobar, 2004, p. 221). This is a similar feature of the most recent movement called Anti-development or Post-development.¹⁸ These practitioners believe that markets, institutions and governments are still directed by aspects of globalization.

However, if more focus is placed on bottom up approaches that incorporate "local

¹⁸ Anti-development and Post-development are all referred to as a "radical reaction to the impasse of development theory and policy" (Pieterse, 2000, p. 360). Each is an overlapping theory supported in parts by scholars such as Wolfgang Sachs (1992) and Arturo Escobar (1992a) to name a few.

knowledge and accumulated wisdom, respectful partnership, and participatory practice that will empower the poor by means of allowing them to define their own development problems” (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004, p. 52). The most recent Anti-development and Anti-globalization stance is not the dominant philosophy at present, but it represents the philosophy of many smaller institutions and scholars.

In the 1990s, the Washington Consensus caused a rebirth of economic development that was based on market-led growth (Canel, Idemudia & North, 2010; Thomas, 2000b). The IMF, the World Bank and the United States Treasury have all worked together to “dismantle much of the regulatory legislation and public institutional capacity” that was created during the post World War Two atmosphere of development policy (Canel et al., 2010, 8; Gore, 2000). According to Canel et al. (2010), the Washington Consensus was designed as a way to open up the Global South to foreign investment, especially in petroleum and mineral rich regions. These two divides are what define the world at present; separated between institutions that challenge the capitalist nature of an economically and financially driven world (Bowles, 2005; Escobar, 2004; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004), and those who believe that the market is the cure for all economic and social problems plaguing the Global South (Canel, et al., 2010; Gore, 2000; Thomas, 2000b).

The Use of Mining, Megaprojects and Hydroelectric Dams as ‘Development’

With the instalment of neoliberal policies since the 1980s, developing states lost much of their control over wealth within their borders (Keeling, 2004). Natural resources are increasingly exploited through mining projects, megaprojects and hydroelectric dams

as a result of debt related pressures and politics (Schrijver, 1993) Todd Gordon and Jeffery Webber (2008) explain that policies inflicted by the World Bank and the IMF upon 'developing' countries subdued the Global South as a part of a capitalist agenda

As elsewhere, structural adjustment has forced open the economies of the region to capital from the North and led to a massive wave of privatization, drastic cutting of public spending and the transformation of collective lands into privately owned property. The mining industry benefitted greatly from this and itself has been particularly clear about its goals for investment across Latin America (Gordon & Webber, 2008, p. 68)

'Development' processes have been modified in decades since by the United Nations (UN) with the creation of the "Business-UN Partnership Program" and a "Global Compact" that involves both transnational corporations and international organizations such as Shell, Coca Cola Company and Walmart (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004, p. 47, UN-Business, 2011). These groups practice a vision of 'development' that protects the interests of a worldwide community of nations

Canada plays a significant role in this form of 'development'. The largest multinational resource extraction companies in the world are based in Canada (Gordon & Webber, 2008, p. 63). As such, when Canadian mining companies¹⁹ began investing significant capital into areas such as Latin America, it paralleled the neoliberal policies and enforced the strategies proposed by the Washington Consensus in the 1990s (Canel et al., 2010, Gordon & Webber, 2008). Saleem Ali (2003, p. xix-xx) explains that in today's world, there is a reliance on "mining as a primary source of raw material and fuel for production at all levels of industry." As such, a reliance on mining makes these companies very powerful entities. Ali (2003, p. xx) goes further by saying that mining

¹⁹ Throughout this thesis, the use of resource extraction as 'development' will be highlighted with the specific example of mining by Canadian companies. I acknowledge that there are other resource based forms of 'development,' like hydroelectric dams and megaprojects, which will be discussed in detail later on. As a Canadian, I feel it is important to highlight Canada's role in Guatemala and 'development' applications abroad.

companies have the capacity to “bring a sudden surge of development in otherwise remote and impoverished parts of the world.” This view is echoed by Canadian government officials and resource based companies alike (Canel et al., 2010; Lambert, 2004). Specifically, mining is seen as not only a capital enterprise for Northern and Southern nations, but it is also seen as the solution for underdevelopment. In 2004, Former Canadian Ambassador to Guatemala James Lambert said that “through sustainable development of our mining resources, these communities are creating the economic, cultural and social infrastructure necessary to secure their future and the future of their children” (Lambert, 2004; Mychalejko, 2005, p. 4-5). While not all Canadian companies or officials share this viewpoint, it is necessary to acknowledge this viewpoint when drawing attention to the different perspectives and perceptions of development practices.

Critiques of Mainstream ‘Development’

*“Development has relied exclusively on one knowledge system, namely, the modern Western one”
(Escobar, 1995, p. 13).*

‘Development,’ as it is known today, is a condition that has been shaped and defined by governments, institutions and now corporations in the Global North (Escobar, 1995; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004). As Marcus Power (2003) explains, each change in the development paradigm has been justified over time, because all ‘development’ from the dominant positions and approaches is seen as serving the greater good of the world. However, we can now ask “for whom” is the greater good is being served? I would argue that it seems ‘development’ has predominantly been about economic prosperity in the Global North and promoted suffering in the Global South in the process. Escobar (1995,

p. 3) takes special notice of the United Nations statement from 1951 entitled *Measures for the Economic Development of Underdeveloped Countries*, in which “[t]here is a sense in which rapid economic progress is impossible without painful adjustments... [v]ery few communities are willing to pay the full price of economic progress.” This declaration shaped the past six decades of ‘development.’ Thus, according to the United Nations, failure to ‘develop’ along a prescribed path is seen as a weakness, furthering the justification of the strong Global North to impose policies on the naïve Global South.

Institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF and the United Nations have all played a part in promoting macroeconomic policies that have driven particular dominant forms and versions of ‘development.’ Specifically, we can see the effect these institutions had on development thinking and practice during the 1980s with the emergence of a neoliberal paradigm. Massive amounts of wealth are transferred from the Global South to the Global North through SAPs, debt re-management practices, and the opening of local economies into international markets (Gordon & Webber, 2008; Kerr, 1999).

‘Development’ as Vandana Shiva (2001) suggests, is more about the globalized forces of commerce, greed and profits, than offering a cure for poverty and inequality. I am in agreement with Simon Springer (2008, p.4) that the Global North is “choking the [S]outh” and what once started as a path to modernization has morphed once again into “capitalist imperialism” (Gordon & Webber, 2008, p. 65).

There are critiques of neoliberalism and its persistence in Latin America from the end of the 1970s, throughout the 1980s, 1990s and into the new millennium (Simon, 2002). David Simon (2002, p. 86) says that neoliberalism is “an economic creed that seeks to deregulate markets as much as possible to promote ‘free’ trade. It harks back to

the ideas of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, in other words, to the very roots of neo-classical economics.” I would argue that despite shifts away from economic dependence in policies and programs (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004; Rist, 1999), the truth is that ‘development’ practices today, at least in Latin America, are very much still dependant on economic measures (Simon, 2002). Neoliberalism has been kept alive over the decades by institutions like the World Bank, the IMF, the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), transnational corporations and the ruling elite (COPAE, 2008a; Escobar, 1995; Nolin & Stephens, 2010). As Susan George (cited in Nolin & Stephens, 2010, p. 9-10) explains, “Neoliberalism is the defining political economic paradigm of our time – it refers to the policies and processes whereby a relative handful of private interests are permitted to control as much as possible of social life in order to maximize personal profit.” Unfortunately, the funds made through neoliberal policies do not trickle down into society, but rather enhance privatization and increase transnational corporations’ influence in the Global South (Nolin & Stephens, 2010).

Shifts in the development paradigm have been adopted from a critical re-thinking (Power, 2003) of policies and practices implemented over the past six decades inspired by historical scholars like Karl Marx, Jürgen Habermas, Thomas Kuhn and later Michel Foucault and Edward Said (Schrijvers, 1993). Particularly, since the 1980s, there is a movement towards deconstructing ‘development,’ in which countries are “un-developing” themselves (Escobar, 1995, p. 6). In recent years, institutions and corporations have paid more attention to areas of the Global South when designing catch-phrases to be implemented that better meet their own needs. I am aware that little attention is given to the recipients of this ‘development,’ because the practitioners

designing development policies are “rich and powerful, [and] assume a textbook world in which producers and consumers operate at arms length” and receive equal benefits (Abell, 1999, p. 40). In an attempt to modernize areas of the world, I understand that states and organizations rarely aim at supporting existing institutions that are run by the local population. Instead, aid from the Global North is contingent on making improvements in living conditions by strictly financial means, based on terms and regulations controlled by the lending institutions (Judd, 1999). With this in mind, I agree with Jane Parpart and Henry Veltmeyer’s (2004) explanation, that Anti-development movements recognize that development cannot be ‘given’ to a country, it must to come from within. “It requires attention to local knowledge and accumulated wisdom, respectful partnership, and participatory practices that will empower the poor by means of allowing them to define their own development problems” (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004, p. 52). I attempt to align my own re-thinking of ‘development’ in this way.

Re-thinking (Power, 2003) ‘development’ involves re-evaluating not only the practice but also its participants. Most recently, Eduardo Canel, Uwafiokun Idemudia and Liisa North (2010) criticize Canadian corporations operating in the Global South. Canel et al. (2010, p. 5) claim,

that extractive industries have too often failed to address the development needs of communities, which have variously demanded the right to be consulted (including the right to say no), a share in the profits, compensation for damage and lost livelihoods, and greater government regulation of the industry.

This statement is also supported by Gordon and Webber (2008), who acknowledge that the true beneficiaries of neoliberal reforms are transnational corporations, who bring promises of ‘development,’ but rarely follow through. Questioning whose development is best served is often met with great opposition. Namely, I note that companies and some

non-government organizations (NGOs) involved in ‘development’ believe that a “challenge to them is a challenge to the modern way of life” (Ali, 2003, p. 49). In fact, such a dispute should be taken into consideration; perhaps this strategy best emulates “our” development as a benefit to the Global North and not “theirs” in the Global South.

I argue that feminist visions are pivotal factors when re-evaluating ‘development’ since the early 1970s (Escobar, 1995; Schrijvers, 1993). Danish economist Ester Boserup paved the way for feminist thinkers with her 1970 book *Women’s Role in Economic Development* in which she applied a previously unseen variable of ‘women’ as a major factor in the development process (Simon, 2006). Boserup’s work was foundational in the Women in Development (WID) approach, which re-evaluated much of ‘development’ discourse to ask “how” women could be included in Modernization theory planning and programs (Rathgeber, 1990, p. 491). Women and Development (WAD) emerged a short time later in the 1970s with Dependency theory initiatives as a critique of WID (Rathgeber, 1990; Zwart, 1992). Both WID and WAD had critical imperfections that did not address fundamental issues of class and gender equality (Zwart, 1992). In response, a third and more recent perspective known as Gender and Development (GAD) has since emerged to tackle the causes of poverty, inequality and subordination (Zwart, 1992).

According to Eva Rathgeber (1990, p. 495)

A gender-and-development perspective does not lead only to the design of intervention and affirmation of action strategies to ensure that women are better integrated into ongoing development efforts. It leads, inevitably, to a fundamental re-examination of social structures and institutions and, ultimately, to the loss of power of entrenched elites, which will effect some women as well as men.

I understand that GAD is seen as a way to empower women, not as inactive beneficiaries of development aid, but as dynamic agents in their own changing lives (Zwart, 1992). As

Angeles (2004) points out, women are not the problem in development, as WID and WAD had viewed them; instead they are a part of identities that are shaped by gender. However, as Angeles explains, some institutions have conflicting views of what “gender” means; either as women only programs or both women and men focused initiatives (2004, p. 70). As I am influenced by feminist scholars and methodologies, I view gender to mean both men and women participating in creating their own vision of life.

To feminists, most ‘development’ strategies instituted by the Global North have assumed a homogenous and passive population, rather than heterogeneous and self-motivated one (Power, 2003, p. 199). Like these feminists, I do not agree with the current process of ‘development,’ because economic development creates wealth only for the Global North (Kerr, 1999). As a feminist, I disagree with the use of economic measurements such as a country’s gross national product (GNP) as a means for determining development (Judd, 1999; Kerr, 1999). As Ellen Judd (1999, p. 224) says, the “feminist perspective on the current conjuncture affirms that development processes cannot and should not be directed from the outside, nor should they be left to the workings of the unseen hand of the market.” I would argue that the contemporary history of ‘development’ shows that trade and economics are more valuable than human life and that the protection of life is seen as a crime (Shiva 2001, p. 16). These viewpoints are what drive many to re-think the way in which ‘development’ is practiced and has been pursued for the past six decades; questioning for whom it best serves. I am in agreement with feminists and critics of the ‘development’ discourse as they have united their examination of the evolution of domination and resistance that is evident in grassroots

movements that recognize the roles of knowledge, culture and gender in a more pluralistic and egalitarian self-determined development (Escobar, 1992a).

Changes in development discourse call for an “alternative to development” (Escobar cited in Nederveen Pieterse, 2000, p. 362). Arturo Escobar (1995; Fagen, 1999; Hettne, 2002) appeals to scholars and practitioners to embrace different theories that have been put forward by Post-development scholars at the turn of the century. Post-development, according to Wolfgang Sachs (Howitt, 2001; Nederveen Pieterse, 2000, p. 361; Sachs, 1992), is a resistance to forms of ‘development,’ rather than emancipation from it. “[P]ost-development is above all a critique of the standard assumptions about progress, who possesses the keys to it and how it may be implemented” (Sidaway, 2002, p. 16). Above all, Post-development theorists, such as Wolfgang Sachs (1992) and Gustavo Esteva (1992; Thomas, 2000b), believe ‘development’ as it has been implemented has failed, and the agendas imposed in the name of ‘development’ today are a “hoax” (Thomas, 2000b). I agree that the movement calls for a bottom-up participation of agents who were previously being ‘developed’ (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004). This viewpoint “neither thoroughly deconstructs the paradigm, nor does it explicitly focus on the production of alternative strategies; rather it focuses on the cultural production of resistance at the expense of transformation strategies” (Fagen, 1999, p. 186). As Post-development seeks to understand the practices of ‘development’ that have been applied while searching for an alternative, I position myself as a Post-development scholar within my research. To explain my viewpoint further, I utilize Post-development theories in this thesis to critically evaluate the standard assumptions of progress that have driven ‘development’ since the 1950s (Sidaway, 2002). According to James Sidaway (2002, p.

17), there are “no easy answers” to the questions of development; however he insists that we should question ‘development’ motives made by the Global North. This critique is a call towards visibility, participation and justice for those being ‘developed’ (Munck, 1999). I am increasingly informed by authors such as Sachs (1992), Esteva (1992) and Sidaway (2002) in my research and keep the elements of Post-development thinking close when conducting my own research.

Anti-development can be seen at as a reaction within Post-development theory. Anti-development is described by Sachs (1992) and Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2000, p. 360) as being outdated and a response to the impasse of development policies and theory. Like Post-development, Anti-development relies on giving voice to those who were previously excluded from Development theory (Munck, 1999, p. 204; Nederveen Pieterse, 2000), such as Indigenous populations and women. Recognizing people as agents in their own self-determined development is the foundation of re-thinking practices (Thomas, 2000a). Thus, I argue that when mining companies accuse peaceful protestors as “anti-development” (Mychalejko, 2005, p. 3) they are both correct and incorrect in their assumptions. In this case, activists stand for alternative visions that are different than those held, for example, by multinational corporations. However, assuming that the activists want to return to subsistence living is a naive assumption. Instead, Anti-development relates to a re-thinking of the dominant ‘development’ models in an attempt for self-determined ways of living (Loomis, 2000; Thomas, 2000a).

The praxis of Post-development and Anti-development are known as looking “beyond-development” (Nederveen Pieterse, 2000) as a way to reject people being treated as ‘victims’ and instead promotes agency among populations to achieve a

development that is from within (Fagen, 1999). I will note that this is an alternative movement that is people-centric and based on participation in a movement away from a strictly economic model of 'development.' This critique of the mainstream paradigm promotes clear proposals and methods that attempt to meet the challenges faced by people in today's world (Kothari, 1989; Nederveen Pieterse, 2000). With this in mind, I am able to attempt a re-thinking of 'development' while understanding the dynamics of the Guatemalan 'development' experience.

Indigenous Development

Since President Truman's 1949 speech, there is a tendency to homogenize people considered 'underdeveloped,' and neglect individuals' cultural rights and freedoms. Subsequent contemporary theories mistakenly ignore those cast to the margins of 'development' and focus instead on top-down macroeconomic approaches. According to Terrence Loomis (2000, p. 896; Blaser, Feit & McRae, 2004), Indigenous populations "have been typified in colonialism and modernization theories as 'traditional' peoples clinging to the past, who must undergo inevitable change which will allow them to enjoy the supposed benefit of modern (Western) society." Indigenous peoples have existed "at the periphery of the periphery" making it increasingly important to create a specific place for Indigenous populations when re-thinking 'development' policies and practices (Loomis, 2000; Tucker, 1999, p. 19).

Indigenous populations around the world have been treated similar to nature, as an object to dominate. As Mario Blaser (2004, p. 27; Blaser et al., 2004) explains, "[t]he more nature was mastered, the less humankind was dependent on nature, and the further

humankind moved in the line of progress.” Indigenous people have been subjected to displacement, dispossession, cultural and physical genocide and overly exposed to risks. I argue that this has all been justified as serving the greater good of ‘development.’ By resisting forms of globalization, economic expansion and opportunities to industrialize, Indigenous populations have been seen as ‘backwards’ or ‘against development’ by institutions, governments and corporations (Howitt, 2001).

Activists and scholars in Latin America are recognized as some of the initial critics of the dominant discourses of ‘development’ in the 1960s. Attempts were made to stop developmentalist waves as well as to guide new policies to benefit their endeavours. However, I understand that the Global North overlooked these challenges and the policies of the ‘developed’ world continued to rule the applications in the Global South (Blaser et al., 2004). The expansion of markets ensued, and with it came private corporations supported by financial institutions. “Under prevailing conditions, the control of power in development decision-making and implementation lies in corporations and political institutions, rather than with the project-affected peoples” (Johnston & Garcia-Downing, 2004, p. 227). A positive recognition of this injustice is likely to advance movements in changing development agendas and policies, especially surrounding resource based ‘development’ initiatives where Indigenous rights and concerns are prominent issues (Howitt, 2001; Loomis, 2000). Thus, I draw from Indigenous development as an alternative approach to mainstream initiatives. I apply the holistic vision of life that Indigenous development presents in my thesis when thinking critically about ‘development’ practices.

Indigenous activists have brought their struggles to the forefront of ‘development’ initiatives. Despite their neglect in the dominant discourse, I understand that “Indigenous peoples’ struggles are now carried on within complex transnational networks and alliances that transverse the boundaries between state, markets and civil society, including the environmentalist and human rights movements” (Blaser et al., 2004, p. 1; Schrijvers, 1993). This process was initiated by Indigenous populations and is increasingly supported by grassroots NGOs, institutions and scholars globally. Indigenous development is not simply “resistance for the sake of resistance,” instead it is an attempt to achieve respect for traditions, cultures and ways of life that are in harmony with nature, albeit different than those imposed by the Global North (Blaser et al., 2004; Loomis, 2000, p. 896)

Chapter 3: The Guatemalan Experience of ‘Development’

The Guatemalan Experience of ‘Development’

“While economic control has replaced military coercion as the Guatemalan state erects a democratic veneer for international consumption, the current pattern of economic restructuring in the highlands, whether guided directly by the military, by international funding organizations, or by the market, has been extremely successful in reducing the economic and political autonomy of Indian communities” (Benso et al., 2008, p. 52).

Located in the heart of Central America, Guatemala has been recognized as an independent nation since 1821 (Lovell, 2000). However, the country’s history describes a story of conquest, colonialism, and imperialism that did not end with the state’s separation from Spain. Dr. W. George Lovell (1988, p. 47) describes how contemporary Guatemala “resembles the sixteenth [century, as] the parallels between cycles of conquest hundreds of years apart are striking.” A state once gripped by colonial rule and used for its rich agricultural and resource bounty is once again caught in a wave of ‘development’ that has inflicted pain, fear, globalization and exploitation of the Guatemalan people and land.

It is crucial to understand the Guatemalan experience of ‘development’ from a perspective of the Indigenous population before analyzing the economic strategies forced upon the country. The majority of the Guatemalan population is Indigenous Maya who have survived conquest, racism, suppression and attempted extermination since the Spanish arrived in 1492 (Anckermann, Dominguez, Soto, Kjaerulf, Berliner & Naima Mikkelsen, 2005; Keeling, 2004; Imai, Mehranvar & Sander, 2007; Jonas, 1991; Lovell, 1988, 2000; NISGUA, 2010; Steinberg, 2006; Viaene, 2010). Today, this majority

population is forced to meet the needs of institutions and corporations in the Global North, along with elite business interests internal to the country, rather than meet the desires of their own communities (Lovell, 1988). Peter Benson, Edward Fischer and Kedron Thomas (2008, p. 38) explain that “[o]ne unpleasant irony of our times is that progress and development often bring with them suffering, inequality and even violence” and that is exactly what the Indigenous Maya experience. The Indigenous people of Guatemala have only been recognized as citizens by their own government since 1987, and since then, they continue the struggle for their rights (Bastos, 2010).

From 1960 to 1996, Guatemala experienced a thirty-six year internal armed conflict that, at its height in the late 1970s and early 1980s, was declared genocide against the Maya people (Arana 2001; Anckermann et al., 2005; Benson et al., 2008; Doyle & The National Security Archive, n.d.; Handy, 2008; Imai et al., 2007; Jonas, 1991; NISGUA, 2010; Nolin, 2006; Nolin Hanlon & Shankar, 2000; Ogle, 1998; Reade & Nolin, 2008; REHMI, 1999; Taylor, 2007; Viaene, 2010). In 1999, the Recovery of Historical Memory Project (REHMI) was brought forward by Guatemala’s Catholic Church in an attempt to address the genocide and contribute to the creation of a new Guatemala (REHMI, 1999; Campaign for Peace and Life in Guatemala, 1999a, 1999b). According to the REHMI report (1999, p. xxxii),

[d]uring the sixties, in addition to combat between guerrillas and the army, government violence targeted peasants in the eastern part of the country. In the seventies, state violence was particularly virulent in the cities... In the early eighties, counterinsurgency policy took the form of state-sponsored terrorism featuring systematic, mass destruction, particularly of indigenous communities and organized peasant groups.

The physical conflict between the militarized government and the Indigenous population did not formally come to an end until the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996 (Arana,

2001, Abell, 1999, Imai et al , 2007, REHMI, 1999, Vianene, 2010) The internal armed conflict left 200,000 people dead, 50,000 “disappeared,”²⁰ one million internally displaced, and more than 200,000 refugees who fled the country (Nolin, 2006) from a documented 600+ massacres, 440 villages destroyed, and 42, 275 registered acts of violence (Anckermann et al , 2005, Doyle & The National Security Archive, n d , Imai et al , 2007, NISGUA, 2010, Vianene, 2009) As indicated by the 1999 report of the United Nations-sponsored Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH),

the Guatemalan state was responsible for 93 percent of the conflict’s human right’s violations, while the guerrillas were responsible for just 3 percent Furthermore, the [CEH] located the root causes of the conflict in historical structural injustice toward and economic exclusion of the indigenous population (Aylward, 2010, Vianene, 2010, p 6, Manz, 2008, Ross, 2004)

Today, Guatemala is still ravaged with violence and psychological warfare that divides the population in fear (Anckermann et al , 2005, Campaign for Peace and Life in Guatemala, 1999a, Green, 2004, Zur, 1998) The human rights violations that are defined in the REHMI and CEH all happened under the watchful eyes of the Global North, as institutions and international governments pushed for economic advancements in Guatemala (Nolin, 2006)

As contemporary ‘development’ agendas emerged from the Global North at the end of World War Two, Guatemala was being shaped by decisions made in the United States (COPAE, 2008a, Kirkpatrick, 1979, LaFeber, 1984a, 1984b, Schlesinger, Nuccio & Schirmer, 1999) In 1954, in an attempt to suppress communist influences and secure

²⁰ Enforced disappearances were first practiced in a campaign by the Third Reich during World War Two Enforced disappearances were later adopted by military forces in Latin America To ‘disappear’ is a process in which a person is removed from the protection of the law, held and transported to areas without the knowledge of the ‘disappeared’ person, or their family This is classified as both a crime of war, and against humanity (Finucane, 2010) During the Guatemalan conflict, people were ‘disappeared’ as a method of terror and intimidation for those left not knowing where their family members were taken (REHMI, 1999)

multinational interests, the CIA-sponsored coup d'état in Guatemala overthrew a democratically elected government that attempted to take unused land away from the Boston-based United Fruit Corporation (UFCo) and redistribute these unused plots to the landless population (Anckermann et al., 2005; Handy, 2008, 1994; Jonas, 1991; Imai et al., 2007; Lovell, 1988; Schlesinger et al., 1999).

Initially... the United States played a very direct role in the restructuring process; subsequently a new *modus operandi* emerged in the Guatemalan ruling coalition, with the bourgeoisie exercising indirect control, and the armed forces... becoming central to the functioning of the state (Jonas, 1991, p. 57; Fagen, 1987).

The United States changed the course of Guatemalan history. This direct role played by the United States was possible because Guatemala was labelled 'undeveloped' by the Global North and thus became a centre for 'development' via militarization and international markets.

Even before neoliberal policies took hold of Latin America, Guatemala was subjected to agricultural diversification for massive export crops (Fagen, 1987; Handy, 2008, 1994; Jonas, 1991; Keeling, 2004). "From the mid-1950s to 1976, Guatemala's agriculture economy diversified substantially... [a]long with coffee and bananas, new agricultural export crops, most especially cotton, sugar cane, and cattle, became important" for the economic model of 'development' embraced and promoted by the Global North (Benson et al., 2008; Handy, 1984, 2008, p. 7; Hale, 2002). At this point in time, there is a shift away from *milpas*²¹ towards export agriculture (Benson et al., 2008). While newly formed plantations benefitted from the profits of amalgamating the land, local communities quickly became impoverished (Handy, 2008; Smith, 1984). Resource

²¹ *Milpas* are known as the traditional crops of corn and beans; staples of the Guatemalan diet (Benson et al., 2008).

extraction companies such as the International Nickel Company (INCO) of Canada also took advantage of the opening of the Guatemalan economy before neoliberal reform in the 1960s with the support of the country's oligarchy (COPAE, 2008a; Nolin & Stephens, 2010). The mining company's "involvement in Guatemala was part of a corporate strategy to maintain its position in the world nickel market" (Imai et al., 2007, p. 105; Jonas, 1991; Paley, 2007). It is important to remember that the policies of economic development enforced in countries such as Guatemala treated the population as a homogenous group, and thus neglect the varied impacts that 'development' has on regions, peoples and places (Keeling, 2004).

From an economic development perspective, attempting to produce non-traditional exports gave Guatemala a 'comparative advantage' of cheap labour in Central America. Economic and neoliberal strategies further opened the country to the international market and increasingly attracted foreign direct investment (FDI) (COPAE, 2008a; Jonas, 1991). Susanne Jonas (1991) explains that the Guatemalan government was seen as the stabilizer for development and export diversification, but had relied on massive financial support from the World Bank and other institutions. By the 1980s, "neoliberalism and IMF-style 'adjustment' [brought] the dismantling of those state structures, as a part of 'opening' the economy to the world market" (Jonas 1991, p. 83; Keeling 2004). Slowly, the grips of the military were eclipsed by economic control over the land and the people (Benson et al., 2008). In an attempt to further economically 'develop' the country, the IMF and the World Bank funded millions of dollars to international mining companies in the name of 'development' (Hale, 2002; Mychalejko, 2005). Massive loans did not keep Guatemala out of debt during the wave of

neoliberalism and, as a result, we must re-think the ‘development’ policies placed upon these areas of Latin America (Hale, 2002; Jonas, 1991).

The signing of the 1996 Peace Accords initiated the end of a ruthless armed internal conflict, but the state is still driven by violence and elusive promises of peace (Benson & Fischer, 2009; Manz, 2008). “Unfortunately structural conditions like economic injustice, the impunity, the discrimination and the unfair distribution of land and income still exists in Guatemala” (Anckermann et al., 2005, p. 140). The same people responsible for acts of genocide during Guatemala’s internal conflict are in power today as politicians, military and organized crime leaders (Bellino, 2010).²² During the internal conflict, international companies, such as the United Fruit Company (Jonas, 1991), continued to expand and expropriate land that once belonged to the Indigenous populations. As such, there is increasing Indigenous resistance to neoliberal ascendancy since the mid 1990s informed by a growing “culture of rights” (Cáceres, 2000; Hale, 2002; Imai et al., 2007). In recent years, growing conflict between Guatemalan Indigenous groups, their government, the World Bank, Canadian mining companies and other megaproject ‘developers’ is evident. The Maya are “forced to fight for their lives and way of life” and are up against continued “violence, repression, exploitation, racism, and environmental destruction inherent with the nature of capitalist globalization” (Mychalejko, 2005, p. 5). This discrimination is not just from institutions and companies. In fact, the Guatemalan oligarchy is responsible for much of the promotion of neoliberal policies in the country (Bastos, 2010; COPAE, 2008a). Thus, the Guatemalan experience

²² In 2003, former dictator General Efraín Ríos Montt ran a political campaign for President, despite his crimes against humanity, and nearly won. The runner up in the election, Otto Pérez Molina, was commander of the Guatemalan intelligence agency in El Quiché during the armed conflict (Benson et al., 2008, REHMI, 1999). The government of Guatemala bars those who have participated in a coup d’état, from being President through Article 186 of the Guatemalan Constitution (Benson et al., 2008, p. 46).

of ‘development’ is divided at the expense of the vast majority of the Indigenous population. The “development as growth” approach continues to make problems worse, as it excludes Indigenous Guatemalans from the ‘development’ process (Aylward, 2010, p. 66).

Consultations and Resource Extraction in Guatemala

“The central struggle in Guatemala continues to be the land; who digs it up, who controls the products of the earth” (Ross, 2004, p. 77).

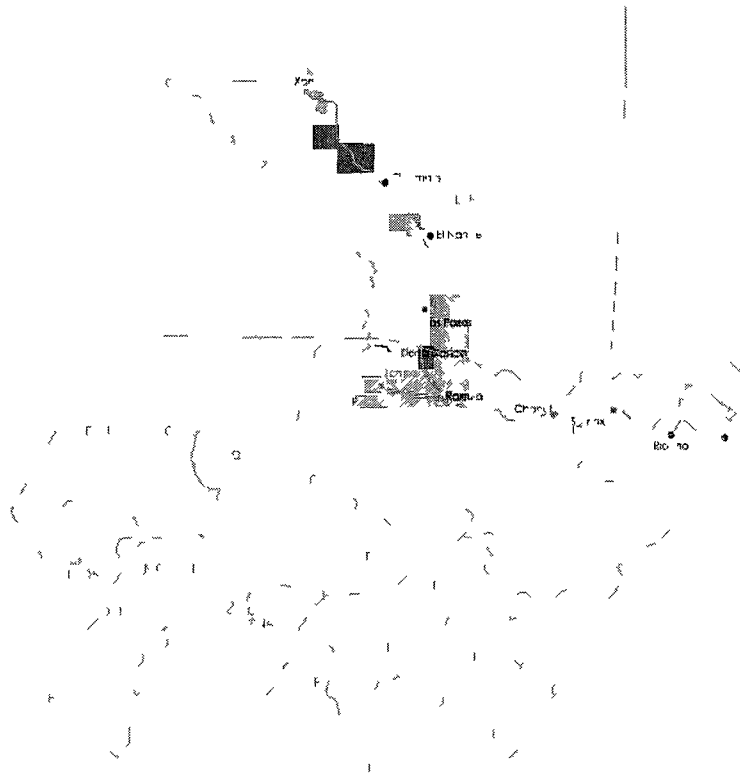
A significant aspect of the 1996 Peace Accords surrounds the *Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, “which established political rights for Mayan people by redefining Guatemala as a multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual nation” (Imai et al., 2007, p. 107). Indigenous Guatemalans work hard to defend their land and protect their way of life that has long been threatened. The struggle for justice and rights continues in Guatemala and is met with much resistance both internally and externally (Haas, 2008). This struggle is especially prominent between international mining corporations, hydroelectric and megaproject ‘developers’ and the local Indigenous communities who have different visions of life.

In the past few years, the Guatemalan government has granted over 400 mining licenses within Guatemala and the industries are looking to expand further onto Maya land and communities (NISGUA, 2010).²³ Both extraction and exploration licenses are facilitated by the ruling elite and past President Alvaro Arzú who created a mining law in 1997 that “dictates 99 [percent] of revenues be repatriated by multinational companies,

²³ In Guatemala, concessions for mining, hydroelectric dams and megaprojects have all been given without the consent of the Indigenous population as the ruling government maintains control of the land and the resources beneath the surface (Haas, 2008; PBI, 2010).

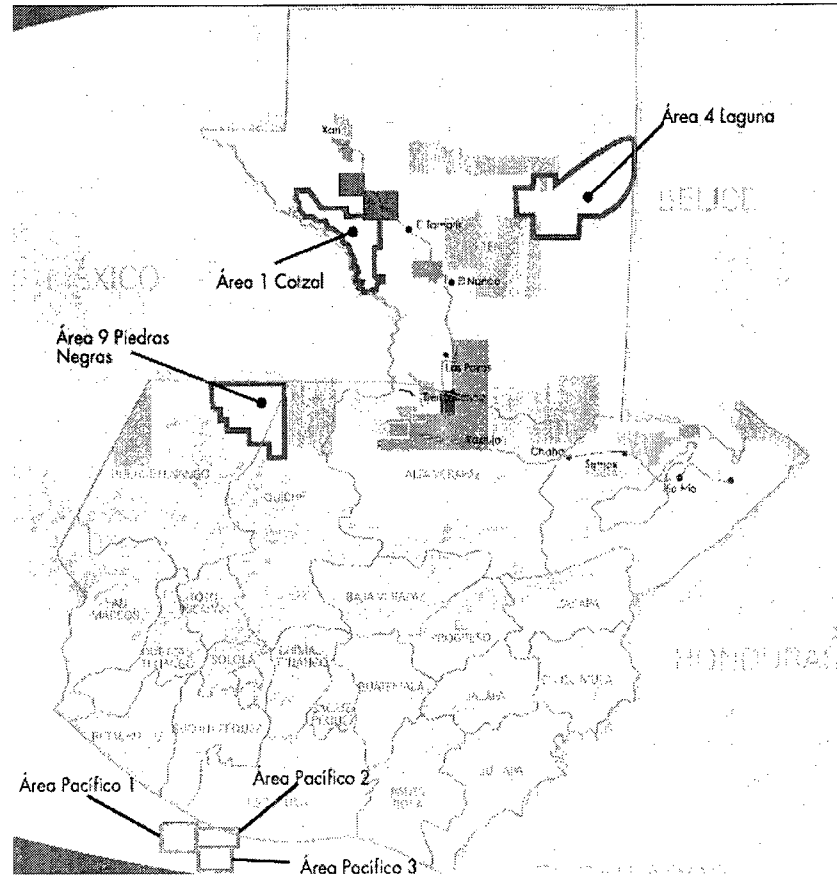
leaving royalties in Guatemala of only 1 [percent]” (COPAE, 2008a, p. 27; COPAE, 2008b). Indigenous communities are forming together in an effort to expel resource extraction companies off their rightful land and/or to negotiate fair agreements. International organization NISGUA (2010, p. 1) quoted a member of the Department Assembly of Huehuetenango (a North-West department), describing the reasons for opposing resource extraction: “[w]e seek to strengthen democracy and the rights of Indigenous peoples, according to our ancestral Mayan values, in order to build a new model for an equitable and inclusive society founded on social justice principles and harmony with Mother Nature.” The Guatemalan government and international companies ignore this demand.

According to Invest in Guatemala (2008), international investors are attracted to Guatemala’s emerging market and potential for FDI. Companies are drawn to Guatemala’s rich natural resources and openness to investment that, on paper, looks inviting and problem free. For example, the following six maps illustrate Guatemala’s current and future potential in petroleum, mining and electric transmission. Map 3.1 illustrates Guatemala’s current petroleum extraction areas. Most licenses are confined to four departments: Petén, Izabal, Alta Verapaz and a small section of El Quiché.



Map 3 1 Current petroleum extraction areas in Guatemala
Source Invest in Guatemala, 2008

In the future, Invest in Guatemala (2008) predicts that Guatemala will have petroleum extraction investments in far more areas. As seen in Map 3 2, petroleum licenses will expand deeper into the Peten, as well as El Quiche and Huehuetenango. As well, Invest in Guatemala (2008) sees the potential for off shore resource extraction.



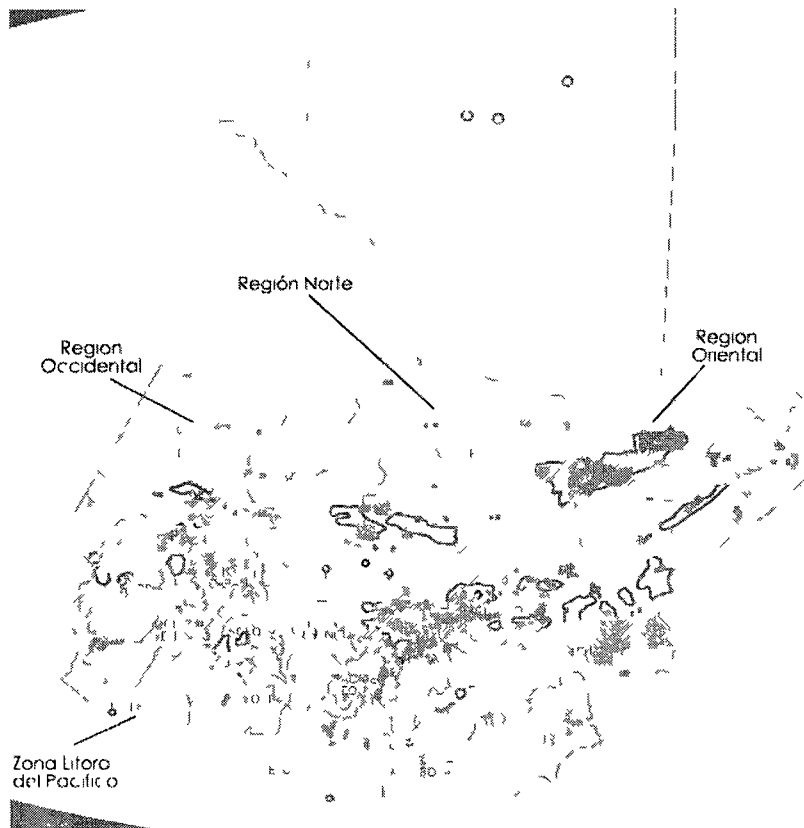
Map 3.2 Potential petroleum areas in Guatemala.
Source: Invest in Guatemala, 2008.

Mining exploration is an increasing form of investment for foreign companies in Guatemala (Gordon & Webber, 2008). Canadian based mining corporations are leaders in models of ‘development’ applied through resource extraction (Nolin & Stephens, 2010), while international institutions, such as the World Bank, also play a significant role by promoting foreign direct investment (Invest in Guatemala, 2008; World Bank, 2009). Map 3.3, current mining extraction operations are shown.



Map 3.3 Current mining operations in Guatemala
Source: Invest in Guatemala, 2008

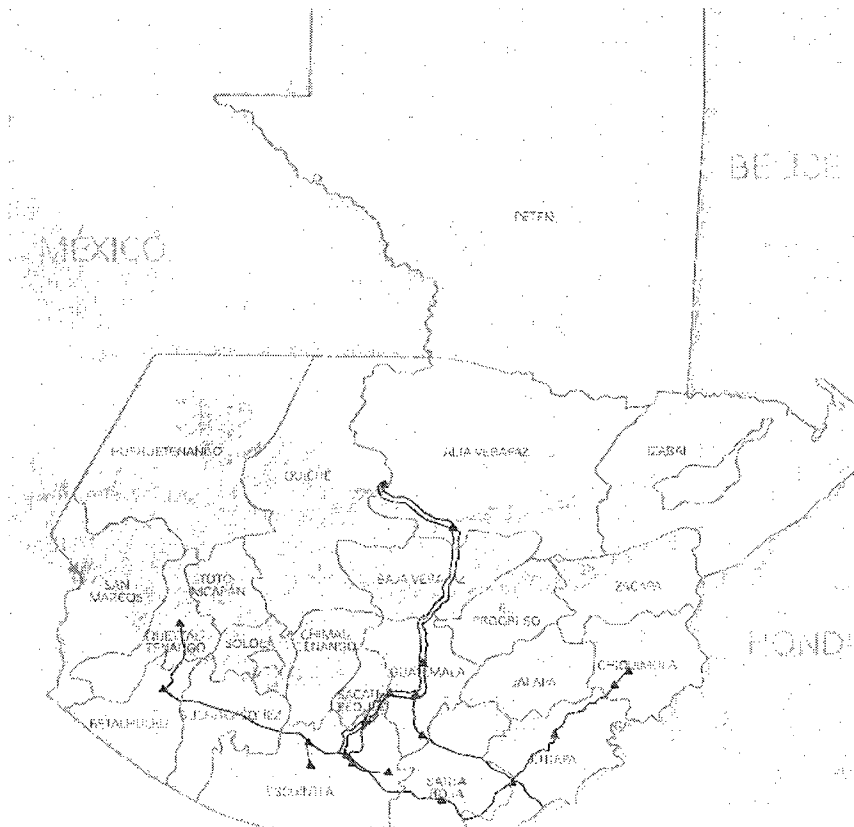
NISGUA (2010, p. 1-2), accounts for 400 mining licenses granted within Guatemala and 41 in the department of Huehuetenango alone. Almost every department has mineral mining licenses, according to Invest in Guatemala (2008). Catherine Nolin and Jacquie Stephens (2010, p. 3) state that one tenth of Guatemala is covered by mining concessions and licenses, many of which are on Indigenous lands. Map 3.4 demonstrates Guatemala's potential for mining in the future.



Map 3 4 Potential mining projects in Guatemala

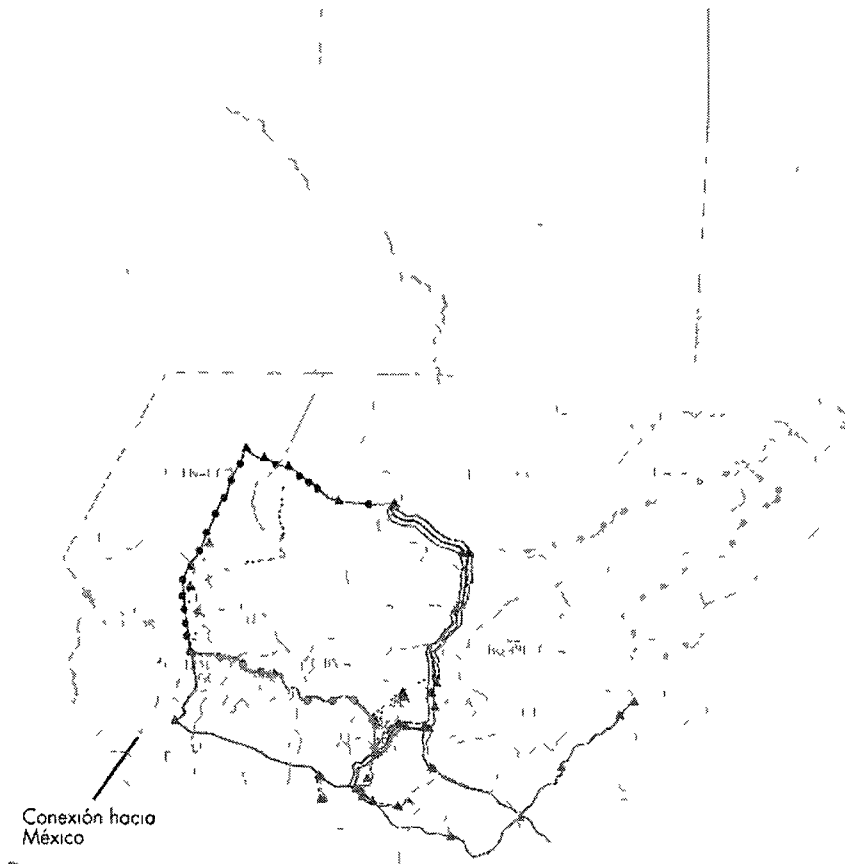
Source Invest in Guatemala, 2008.

The map reveals that all of Guatemala has potential for resource extraction. There is “often a negative impact of mining on environment – mining threatens [I]ndigenous ways of life through pollution, the destruction of sacred sites and landscapes, and the imposition of Western values” (Nolin & Stephens, 2010, p. 15-16). Investment in mining continues to grow (Mychalejko, 2005), and so too do the problems associated with it. Map 3 5 depicts the current electrical projects in place in Guatemala. For now, the electric projects are limited to the South-Central area of Guatemala.



Map 3.5 Current electrical projects in Guatemala.
Source: Invest in Guatemala, 2008.

However, Invest in Guatemala (2008) proposes potential placements for new hydro projects in the future; expanding into all but the northern department of Petén as seen in Map 3.6.



Map 3.6 Potential electrical projects in Guatemala.
Source. Invest in Guatemala, 2008

Neoliberal policies are increasing in power over Latin America with influences of ‘free trade’ agreements, such as the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), privatization, and the growing control of transnational corporations (Nolin & Stephens, 2010, 10). Indigenous rights continue to be ignored by the Guatemalan government and transnational companies (Einbinder & Nolin, 2010; Haas, 2008; Handy, 2008; Laplante & Nolin, 2011) because “[m]ining companies often claim that while peasants [sic] own the land, the state owns the underground resources, and therefore the companies are allowed to evict the villagers” (Haas, 2008, p. 25). Investment in resource rich countries like Guatemala is lucrative for transnational corporations and governments in the Global

North (Einbinder & Nolin, 2010; Laplante & Nolin, 2011). ‘Development’ expressed through resource extraction does not reflect the visions for life articulated by the Indigenous Maya population. J.P. Laplante and Catherine Nolin (2011, p. 27) explain that the Maya’s appeal for ‘development’ is not for more mining, or expanded neoliberal policies; instead “their primary request – [is] that the compan[ies] get out.” Broadening neoliberal policies have helped expand Guatemala’s potential for FDI (COPAE, 2008a), at the expense of the local Maya (Einbinder & Nolin, 2010; Haas, 2008; Laplante & Nolin, 2011).

The International Labour Organization’s (ILO)’s *Indigenous and Tribal People’s Convention No. 169* was designed to act as an international law (Handy, 2008; Imai et al., 2007; Moody, 2007). As Indigenous movements grow, “commitments under the ILO Convention 169 ... requires community approval of concessions in Indigenous areas, and by commitments to consultations for any money provided by the World Bank in developing mines” (Handy, 2008, p. 29; COPAE, 2008a). Convention No. 169 requires that Indigenous communities are consulted and asked to participate in decision-making processes that involve their land and their livelihoods (Mychalejko, 2005). Few commitments have been made by the Guatemalan government to uphold Convention 169. Instead, many mining, megaproject and hydroelectric companies pursue a vision of economic ‘development’ that is upheld by the Guatemalan elite (NISGUA, 2010).

Consultas are held by communities to vote on whether or not they approve of extractive resource activities in their territory. Since 2005, more than 46 community referendums have been held (COPAE, 2010). Over 800 000 people have voted “no” to invasive forms of ‘development’ in their areas (González, 2011), but the mines,

hydroelectric and megaprojects continue to operate and expand into Indigenous territories. It is important to understand that the *consultas* were analyzed by the Guatemalan Constitutional Court, which states that the Guatemalan population can legally hold *consultas*, but the results are not legally binding (Haas, 2008; Imai et al., 2007). Ignoring these *consultas* is in violation of Indigenous rights, but little is done by the Guatemalan government or the international community to uphold any referendums against the globalization of natural resources (Handy, 2008).

When the validity of a *consulta* is questioned, many communities resort to peaceful protest as there is no dedicated international law to uphold Convention No. 169 (PBI, 2010). The Maya's freedom to demonstrate is met with violent repression by national police, military and private security (Haas, 2008). Indigenous people are depicted as terrorists on their own land, and criminalized by the government and international companies (Bastos, 2010). According to the Guatemala-based Pastoral Commission for Peace and Ecology (COPAE) "[t]here have been community referenda organized in over 26 municipalities in the nation, where... mostly Indigenous [people], have participated and declared themselves against this model of 'development'" (COPAE, 2010; 2008a). Physical and psychological intimidation is used in an attempt to silence the Maya. These threats are continually met with the peaceful expressions of the Indigenous peoples (Haas, 2008; Nolin & Stephens, 2010).

Study Context

Who are the People in the Quiché?

"We live less so others can live more" (Lolita Chavez,²⁴ personal communication, May 13, 2010).

For the purposes of my research, I returned to the departmental capital of Santa Cruz del Quiché where the UNBC Geography Guatemala 2010 delegation visited in May 2010. In the municipality surrounding the city there are 655,510 inhabitants (Government of Guatemala, 2010). Over 60 percent of Guatemalans identify themselves as being Indigenous, but in the highland regions of El Quiché, up to 89.7 percent are Maya (Imai et al., 2007, p. 103; PBI, 2010, p. 6).



Figure 3.1. The Indigenous Maya.

Here, the Indigenous Maya Quiché participants of the 2010 Santa Cruz del Quiché *consulta*.
Source: Rodríguez, 2010.

²⁴ Full names of Indigenous leaders are used for those who spoke to the Guatemala Field School in May 2010 while visiting Santa Cruz del Quiché. Some leaders, who spoke with the delegation in May, are also participants of my MA research in September 2010. I differentiate between the two visits by my use of CAPITALS for participants I spoke to in September, which will be used in Chapters Five and Six.

My initial introduction to the city made a significant impression on me, and set my tone for the remainder of the delegation. My experience here began to revitalize my views of 'development'. I was fortunate enough to have contact with the Reverend Emilie Smith,²⁵ who generously offered the delegation lodging at Peace House.²⁶



Figure 3.2 The Reverend Emilie Smith
Here, the Reverend Smith stands inside the Peace House courtyard
Source: Pedersen, 2010

The Reverend Smith (personal communication, May 12, 2010) described the idea of Peace House not as an organization, or a non-government organization, or even a church,

²⁵ The Reverend Smith is a Canadian Anglican Minister with more than 25 years of experience in Guatemala.

²⁶ Peace House is the English name for the residence, but it is also recognized by *K'at* in the Quiché language. Peace House is a meeting place for Indigenous leaders in the heart of Santa Cruz del Quiché. The house was once an old café, but is now converted into a quiet place for solidarity networking. This transition was made possible through the visions of the Indigenous leaders and the Reverend Emilie Smith, as well as financial contributions made by the Canadian Anglican Church.

but as a place to be and to heal. Moreover, it has become a centre of meeting in both the physical, spiritual and emotional sense, by bringing historical and contemporary issues under one roof in an effort to find solace and solution. While under this roof, I felt like I was home.



Figure 3 3 Peace House

The busy street outside of Peace House The entrance is marked with the flag of the Council of the Peoples of Quiché

Source Nolin, 2010

As safe as I felt inside Peace House, I understand that the department of El Quiché has seen both past and present violence Specifically, as outlined in the REMHI (1999, p 296), in this department an overwhelming number of massacres and military resistances were centralized The region is home mainly to the Quiché Maya, who ruled the highlands of Guatemala since before the Europeans arrived As history demonstrates,

these Maya have long been defending their rights to land and life (Carmack, 1992, Perera, 1993; Smith, 1984) However, it is unfair to say that these people are violent or Anti-development They believe,

[i]n the Mayan worldview or cosmovision, [where] no distinction is made among the social, natural and sacred spheres that make up [their] cosmos [they assume] that interrelations exist between all elements of Creation and that all elements of Creation have a role in maintaining a Natural balance (Viaene, 2010, p 12)

In essence, Mayas believe in living harmoniously with the earth and when that equality is threatened conflicts between them and outsiders heighten (Falla, 2000; Lovell, 1988) What they seek is peace, and this search has yet to be fruitful The Indigenous population is intertwined in a resistance for Mother Earth, their land, natural resources, and socio-cultural rights (PBI, 2010)

The Maya in the region of El Quiché were targeted by the military during *La Violencia*²⁷ By 1982, 15,000 to 20,000 soldiers were stationed in the highlands of El Quiché and 3,000 were soldiers based out of the main military barracks in Santa Cruz del Quiché (Carmack, 1992, p 61, Zui, 1998) As Judith Zur (1998, p 68, Warren, 1998) explains, “the landed oligarchy, which depends on compliant Indian labour, felt seriously threatened by Indian farming co-operatives and peasant (campesino) groups ” Not only did the elite Ladinos²⁸ feel threatened by the Indigenous Quiché Mayas, but they were also fearful of the guerrilla forces that were growing strong throughout the department (Carmack, 1992, Perera, 1993, Wilson, 1995, Zur, 1998) During the 1980s, the

²⁷ *La Violencia* or ‘the violence’ was known as a period of terror from 1978 to 1985 It was focused in the rural areas and “was triggered by the expansion of agro-export estates following the massive foreign investment of the 1960s” (Zui, 1998, p 67, 1994, Green, 2004, 1995)

²⁸ Ladinos are non-Indigenous Guatemalans and those who no longer identify as Indigenous (Carmack, 1992) Historians have identified Ladinos as a “mixed breed” of Spanish fathers and Indian mothers that originated from the initial conquests (Perera, 1993, p 7, Carlsen, 1997, Handy, 1984, Wilson, 1995)

“scorched earth campaign”²⁹ became wildly known under President General Efraín Ríos Montt. The program justified mass killings of Indigenous people because the Quiché Maya were seen as collaborators with guerrilla forces. Montt’s press secretariat later admitted that “[c]learly you had to kill Indians because they were collaborating with subversion... it would be said that you were killing innocent people... [b]ut they weren’t innocent; they had sold out to subversion” (Carmack, 1992, p. 57; REHMI, 1999).

The physical and psychological damage inflicted on the people in El Quiché is irreversible. The army killed many of the Indigenous people in Santa Cruz del Quiché, and the survivors were subjected to both visible and invisible forms of violence (REHMI, 1999; Zur, 1998, 1994). This hostility towards the Maya continues even today. Forces of intimidation are present, against those who speak out against past violence, and contemporary struggles. Indigenous leaders are subjected to death threats and have been ‘disappeared’ (Haas, 2008). But, the people are not broken, as Robert Carmack (1992) reminds us. In fact “in some new revitalized guise, this dynamic culture will yet inspire the native peoples of the Quiché in years to come” (Carmack, 1992, p. 69). This continued strength and fight for life is exactly what I encountered while visiting Peace House.

While in Santa Cruz del Quiché, I experienced the equality shared between Maya men and women. Here, it seemed that Indigenous women leaders were as abundant as Indigenous men. Ricardo Falla (2001, p. 245) supports this experience as “Maya spirituality makes everyone equal, but at the same time it stresses the need for hierarchy

²⁹ The “scorched earth campaign” is described in the REMHI (1999, Carmack, 1992, Handy, 1984) report. Originally started as an army offensive against guerrilla forces in the highland areas, but quickly turned into an indiscriminate attack. Men, women, children, young and old were all threatened, intimidated and murdered by military and civil patrols (PAC). Scorched earth also meant the burning of homes, crops, animals, trees, etc.

by which one rises in service to the community... older men and women are the source of spirituality and deserve the respect of all.” This shared experience of leadership has strengthened both sexes in their ability to bring the community together for common purpose. There is a growing consciousness among all Indigenous persons to live without the need of luxurious commodities or a desire for power. Instead, men, women and children are growing in solidarity towards a humble existence with nature, natural resources and justice (COPAE, 2008a).

In the Quiché region today, growing resistance surrounding the protection of land, earth and water is evident. While with the Guatemala 2010 Field School, and again during my fieldwork, I was able to participate in meetings with the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Quiché* (Council of the Peoples of Quiché) and the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Occidente* (Council of the Peoples of the West).

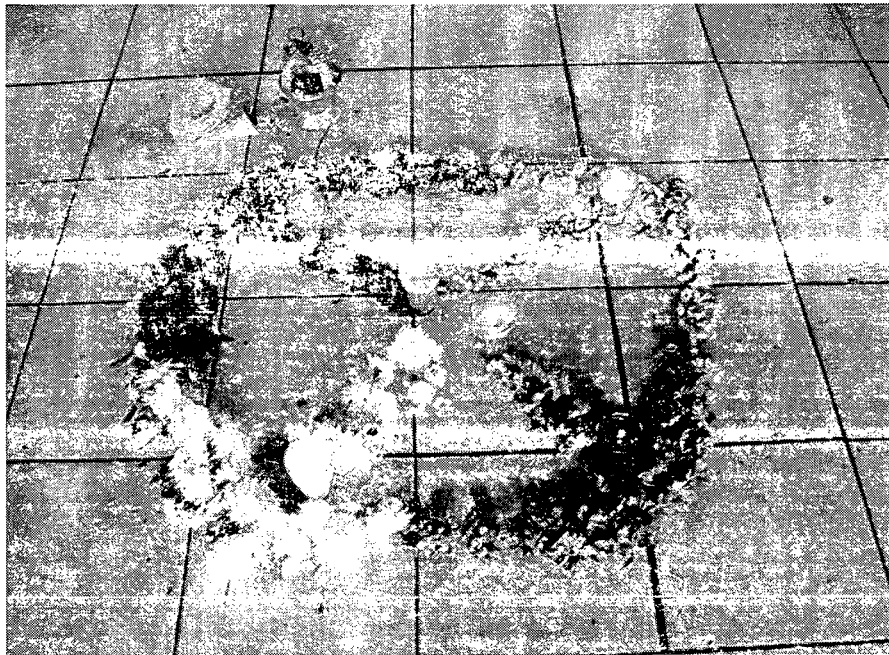


Figure 3.4. Symbol of the Council of the Peoples of the Quiché.
Here at the August meeting of the Council of the Peoples of Quiché, flowers were used to create the organization's symbol of unity.
Source: Pedersen, 2010.

From these groups I learned the meaning of development from a Quiché Maya perspective and their perceptions of imposed ‘development.’ Specifically, Indigenous leaders Paulina Yus (personal communication, May 13, 2010) and Lolita Chavez (personal communication, May 13, 2010) both described their community’s vision of development as being in harmony with Mother Earth and the “web of life.” This view has not been shared by outsiders. Specifically, Chavez explained that various local and international institutions have told the community, that they are poor. This, in fact, is untrue. “We are not poor; they tell us what is poor. Rather we are living simply but well. We live less so others can live more” (Chavez, personal communication, May 13, 2010). Yoni Reyes (personal communication, May 13, 2010) continued the tone of the meeting, indicating that the Maya believe “we are all one,” whether we are from the Global North or Global South; humans are one species and are connected. Together, each member of the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Quiché* (Council of the People of Quiché) reiterated that what they strive for is a holistic self-determined development process that will benefit themselves and their grandchildren to come. There is no greed, no taking without giving and overall a balance to life that is sustainable. I was immediately inspired by such a clear vision and this is why I chose to focus my research with the Quiché Maya of El Quiché, Guatemala.

Chapter 4: Methodologies

Introduction

The purpose of my thesis is to be critical of contemporary ‘development’ and amplify the voices³⁰ of those being ‘developed.’ In order to achieve these goals, I attempt to gain insight into the Indigenous Maya’s perceptions of mainstream ‘development’ and their perspectives of a self-determined model of life through primary research. I do this by speaking with eight Indigenous leaders who represent men, women and children in communities of El Quiché. Obviously, I am not able to speak with every Indigenous community member. However, by speaking with Indigenous leaders who share a common vision and represent a variety of community members, I am able to base my understanding of Indigenous Maya’s lived experiences through their testimonies, as well as my own experiences in Guatemala on two separate delegations in 2010.

My thesis is written from an interdisciplinary stance, as both critical development studies and feminist geography are influential to my studies. Guided by the qualitative methods outlined by Iain Hay (2005), I utilize “local knowledge” to enhance the scope of development studies and critical development thinking (Escobar, 1988, p. 439). Moreover, as I will outline below, I utilize my knowledge of feminist geographies as I conduct my research “with the aim of producing ‘more inclusive methods sensitive to the power relations of fieldwork’” (England, 1994, p. 80; Nolin, 2006, p. 16).

³⁰ See Chapter One for explanation of “amplify the voices.”

In this Chapter, I outline the methods used in my fieldwork conducted in El Quiché, Guatemala and follow up with the writing processes carried out in Canada. I attempt to reflect on the techniques I employed during my data collection, while remaining faithful to the challenges of rigour and reflexivity (Bailey, White & Pain, 1999b; Baxter & Eyles, 1997; Bradshaw & Stratford, 2005; England, 1994; Mansvelt & Berg, 2005). Moreover, this Chapter is a guide to how I initiated and implemented my re-thinking of ‘development.’

The Importance of Fieldwork

My academic life had been bound by the classroom. It was not until my experiences on the 2010 Guatemala Field School that I realized the world cannot be fully described in a textbook: “it is [easier] to accept the world or vision of our delegated expert[s] rather than to muck about in messy situations!” (Zelinsky, 2001, p. 3). Many scholars (Bullard, 2006; DeLyser & Starrs, 2001; England, 1994; Parker, 2001; Price, 2001; Stevens, 1988; Veeck, 2001; Whitlock, 2001; Zelinsky, 2001) have engaged in fieldwork and described it as the most richly rewarding aspect of their studies. As a student at the University of Northern British Columbia, I was encouraged by members of my committee to do the same. Geographers Dydia DeLyser and Paul Starrs (2001) see the process of fieldwork as an essential part of training young geographers in a process that is learned rather than innate. Thus, as a student of international development studies, I knew I had to experience with world with my own eyes and test my knowledge outside institutional walls.

To my surprise, not all scholars view fieldwork as a foundation of learning. As Marie Price (2001, p. 143) discovered, the underlying message among various academics was that “[e]ngaging [with] real-world people is too messy and problematic, and it is generally much safer to theorize the perspectives of women, minorities, or subalterns than to talk with them.” What I say to those practitioners is this: fieldwork is “time-consuming, frustrating, difficult and potentially dangerous” (Bullard, 2006, p. 55; Stevens, 1988), but it is also a way to deeply and personally connect with the world around me (Veeck, 2001). I was excited to face these challenges before starting my fieldwork. I saw it as a way to expand my own research margins as well as boundaries of academia (Cloke, Cook, Crang, Goodwin, Painter & Philo, 2004). As Behar (1996, p. 177) would say, if it “doesn’t break your heart [it] just isn’t worth doing.” I wanted my thesis to be written about something I deeply cared about, and not based on a topic I had picked at random and without connection.

Such an opportunity presented itself when I was invited to participate as a graduate student on the 2010 Guatemala Field School, a delegation that focuses on key human rights and contemporary development issues. Unknowingly, I had agreed to participate in an event that would forever change my life academically and personally. While in Guatemala, on the 2010 Field School, I was able to make acquaintances with key Indigenous leaders in the department of El Quiché. With the translation aid of Grahame Russell of Rights Action,³¹ I became engaged in conversations with Quiché Maya community leaders who were visiting Peace House. I was also given the

³¹ Grahame Russell has been the Co-director of Rights Action since 1995. The organization’s involvement in Guatemala extends to help fund community-controlled development, environmental, human rights and emergency-relief projects. Grahame is also responsible for expanding education and activism work with people in both the United States and Canada to address global exploitation, repression, enviro-destruction and racism. Please see the Rights Action website for more details at <http://www.rightsaction.org/index.htm>

opportunity to speak in front of 150 members of the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Quiché* (Council of the Peoples of Quiché) and the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Occidente* (Council of the Peoples of the West).³² During my speech, I was clear about who I was, how I wanted to learn more about their issues, and how those questions related largely to the division of the Global North and Global South. This remarkable introduction allowed me to build a rapport with individuals who have a keen understanding of ‘development’ issues through lived experience.



Figure 4.1. Meeting with the Councils.

Lolita Chavez (with microphone) speaking to the 150 members of the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Quiché* (Council of the Peoples of Quiché) and the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Occidente* (Council of the Peoples of the West), May 14, 2010.

Source: Nolin, 2010.

³² The meeting at Peace House was held on May 14th 2010 to discuss the issues of imposed ‘development’ in the region. In El Quiché, mining threatens the Indigenous livelihoods and ways of life. These meetings are held to increase solidarity, address issues in the region, plan *consultas*, and coordinate greater resistance, organization and education among the people. The Indigenous leaders in attendance each represented the distinct communities of the region. The UNBC Guatemala 2010 delegation was invited by the organizers of the meeting to make a presentation. With translation provided by Grahame Russell, two other students (Master’s candidate JP Laplante and PhD candidate Claudette Helene Bois) and I stood on behalf of the UNBC Guatemala 2010 delegation. Our goal was to show our solidarity with the Indigenous community and, for me specifically, to explain how the delegation would share their story with Canadians in an effort to empower their struggle.

As Stan Stevens (2001, p. 70; Kirby & McKenna, 1989) points out, “[e]arning research legitimacy revolves around the perception of you and the purposes and value of your work. If people feel the research is worth their time and attention, its success comes to matter to them and they help rather than only tolerate you.” I immediately made a connection with the Quiché Maya leaders, and felt that their work and understanding of development was of great interest to me. Likewise, as Stevens (2001) suggests, my quest to re-think dominant ‘development’ practices appealed to the Indigenous leaders, and they requested I share our interviews with the Global North in the hopes that their struggles be better amplified.



Figure 4.2. UNBC delegation presentation.
Standing left to right – Grahame Russell of Rights Action, MA candidate Alexandra Pedersen,
MA candidate JP Laplante, PhD candidate Claudette Helene Bois, May 14, 2010.
Source: Nolin, 2010.

My return to Canada after the 2010 Guatemala Field School was filled with a longing to go back and to continue my ‘unlearning’ on the subject of development. I was encouraged by Dr. Nolin to return to Santa Cruz del Quiché where I was initially most inspired by the strength and dedication of its Indigenous population. My commitment and solidarity with the cause of the Quiché Maya quickly developed into the core of my thesis research. Arrangements were made to stay in Peace House with the director of the residence, the Reverend Emilie Smith.³³ I spent a mere three weeks designing a new thesis proposal before presenting it to my committee. Shortly after, I gained approval from the UNBC Research Ethics Board (REB) to conduct interviews with Indigenous Maya leaders of El Quiché.

We arranged my return to Guatemala to coincide with a second UNBC/Rights Action delegation that was headed again by Dr. Catherine Nolin and Grahame Russell in August of 2010. Other UNBC graduate students and I accompanied Dr. Nolin and Grahame across Guatemala to follow up with communities and organizations that we visited on the initial UNBC Guatemala 2010 delegation. This journey provided an easy transition from group to individual fieldwork. After a week, I departed from the UNBC/Rights Action delegation and continued on to Peace House in Santa Cruz del Quiché with fellow UNBC graduate student JP Laplante. While I was based in Peace House, the Reverend Emilie Smith acted as my translator for both the Spanish and the local language of Quiché. Emilie’s longstanding history and presence with the Maya of

³³ I was first introduced to The Reverend Emilie Smith in the fall of 2009 while she was visiting UNBC as a guest lecturer and children’s book author. I met with Emilie again in May on the UNBC 2010 Guatemala Field School where she shared stories of her dedication and solidarity with the Indigenous Guatemalan people. Her story started when she married a Guatemalan in the guerrilla resistance during the internal conflict. Now an ordained Anglican Priest with the Anglican Church of Canada, Emilie serves as the director of Peace House in Guatemala, where she operates a small Anglican Church inside. She remains committed to her work and studies in liberation theology while living in Santa Cruz del Quiché.

El Quiché aided in my research as well as my overall experience within the community. In total, I spent three weeks in Guatemala conducting research and follow-up with initial contacts made in May 2010.³⁴

The Application of Methods in ‘the Field’

After my experience in Guatemala in May 2010, I could not justify writing a thesis based solely on an in-depth literature analysis. Instead, I chose to combine scholarly publications, with “[f]ieldwork that would put theory to the test”, as James Clifford said (1997, p. 185). For the purpose of this section, I would like to highlight the importance of ‘the field’³⁵ and the application of its methods. Specifically, the value of ethnographic research cannot be overlooked. Known as “people writing”, ethnography allows researchers to gain insight into a different “way of life” from the perspective of an “insider” (Cloke et al., 2004, p. 169). Perhaps the most informed scholar on the subject, James Clifford (1986, p. 2-3) articulates that:

Ethnography is actively situated *between* powerful systems of meaning. It poses its questions at the boundaries of civilizations, cultures, classes, races, and genders. Ethnography decodes and recodes, telling the grounds of collective order and diversity, inclusion and exclusion. It describes processes of innovation and structuration, and is itself part of these processes.

³⁴ My fieldwork was generously funded by the UNBC Graduate Research Travel Award and the Nolin Research Fund (which is sponsored by UNBC). This funding covered my travel expenses, and allowed me to hire the Reverend Emilie Smith as a translator.

³⁵ ‘The field’ is acknowledged by authors Clifford Geertz (1979), Cindy Katz (1994), Audrey Kobayashi (1994) and Heidi Nast (1994) among others. Specifically, as a researcher, I must understand that “I am always, everywhere in ‘the field’” (Katz, 1994, p. 72). This means I must continually evaluate the physical and spatial aspects of my research in order to strengthen my arguments when connecting the “out there” with academic literature (Nast, 1994, p. 57).

I entered ‘the field’ with an understanding of scholarly literature that spoke about the process of ‘development’, and thus was able to think critically while conducting my own research with those being ‘developed.’ While not writing an ethnography, I certainly draw from the ethnographic literature and value ethnographic research techniques.

While at Peace House, I conducted eight semi-structured interviews with key Indigenous leaders. This interview process allowed me to obtain an insider’s perspective while also allowing me to answer important thesis questions (Dunn, 2005; Leech, 2002). I aimed to use each interview as a way to fill in gaps of information from academic literature, to investigate the complexity of development and to collect more diverse opinions and experiences from the respondents who live with ‘development’ everyday (Dunn, 2005).

Of course, asking only eight people key questions about their experiences of ‘development’ may seem limited. As I anticipated speaking with Indigenous community leaders, I was confident that their *testimonios* would provide me with enough information to amplify the voices of “those who speak from the margins” (Howitt & Stevens, 2005; Huff, 2006; Kobayashi, 1994; Nolin Hanlon & Shankar, 2000, p. 267). Guatemalans are not strangers to the use of *testimonio* as a way to express their own experiences. The REMHI report (1999) is a compilation of testimonies related to the internal armed conflict for the purpose of analysis and as a way to ensure that such violence never surfaces in the country again. As Celia Haig-Brown (2003, p. 420) clarifies, “[c]entral to the testimonial is the fact that the life story presented is not simply a personal matter; rather, it is the story of an individual who is also a part of a community.” Thus, by interviewing leaders in the Indigenous communities, I encapsulated as much of the truth

or “partial truths”³⁶ as possible in an attempt to create an accurate picture of Indigenous perspectives of development (Abu Lughod, 1991; Clifford, 1986, p. 7; Cloke et al., 2004; Madge, Raghuram, Skelton, Willis & Williams, 1997).

During each of my meetings with key Indigenous Maya leaders, I kept in mind the power dynamics both inside and outside the interview process. As Cindy Katz (1994, p. 68) once said, “I am an outsider...but once there, of course, am not outside the power dynamics of the space so marked.” Both Emilie and I were recognized and introduced as Canadians to both interviewees and other members of the communities. I had to keep in mind always that in this area of the world, the main vehicles for development are hydroelectric dams, mines, petroleum fields and other megaprojects often funded and/or owned by external players. Some of these outside forces of ‘development’ are owned and operated from Canada. In Guatemala, being Canadian is no longer an invitation for peace, but rather a target for conflict.

While I am interested in the forms of ‘development’ that are imposed in Guatemala, I am more fascinated with the perspectives and perceptions of those who are being ‘developed.’ Thus, I made no attempts to interview or contact any organizations, neither government nor non-governmental, outside of Guatemala. Also, I did not wish to interact with any local or national governments because of the historical conflicts that still afflict the population of El Quiché even today. These outside perspectives are easily accessible via literature searches, newspapers, websites and documents. With this in mind during my interviews, I remained aware of the power structures that connected me with

³⁶ James Clifford (1986, p. 7) states that “[e]thnographic truths are thus inherently partial – committed and incomplete.” This means that when taking a person’s testimony, an individual will tell the truth to the best of their ability. However, Clifford (ibid) explains that respondents often “lie” by either omission or rhetoric and thus the researcher must understand that while seeking the truth, they will only receive a “partial truth.” This is beyond the researcher’s control, but can be acknowledged through rigour and reflexivity.

whom I was speaking. Also, I was very clear and direct about my relationships with outside agencies; for example, I was not there to exploit the Indigenous leaders for information (Allen, 2003; Browne, 2003; Dowling, 2005; England, 1994; Gilbert, 1994; Mansvelt & Berg, 2005) nor was I an informant for any outside agencies. I was clear and forthright with each person I met. I explained that I am a curious university student wanting nothing more than to understand the world from a different perspective and amplify Indigenous Maya voices as an aspect of my thesis. In addition, I made it expressly clear, that I do not view my respondents as “victims” of ‘development,’ but rather “as actors who have responded to events in ways that help determine no small part in their cultural reality” (Lovell, 1988, p. 26).

As mentioned above, while evaluating the dynamics of power in the field, I became aware of my positioning as an “outsider” on the “inside” (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997a; Katz, 1994). Research is often presented by comparing the ‘developing’ areas of the globe to those deemed ‘developed.’ This comparison between “us” and “others” is the basis of development studies (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997a, p. 43). In this way, I want to acknowledge my responsibility of creating ‘the other.’ “[A]nthropologists are in the business of representing others through their ethnographic writing, then surely the degree to which people in the communities they study should appear ‘other’ must also be partly a function of how anthropologists write about them” (Abu-Lughod, 1991, p. 149). The concept of the “other” is an issue I examined, both in the interviews and in my writing process, when I discuss the issues between North and South development perspectives.

Furthermore, while in ‘the field’, I was careful when positioning myself and continuously aware of my “betweenness” (Katz, 1994; Kobayashi, 1994; England, 1994;

Nast, 1994; Peet, 1998; Staeheli & Lawson, 1994). What I mean by “betweenness” is simply “that we can never *not* work with ‘others’ who are separate and different from ourselves; difference is an essential aspect of all social interactions that requires that we are always everywhere in between or negotiating the world of me and not-me” (Nast, 1994, p. 57). While in ‘the field’, I constantly debated my position between the different development structures I encountered, as I was aware that while researching, I was never fully the “insider” or the “outsider” (Nast, 1994). Like Kim England (1994), I needed to acknowledge that I “cannot fully know and understand the positions and experiences of people in different subject positions,” but I can be rigorous when I attempt to explain my position within my own research (Staeheli & Lawson, 1994, p. 99; Abu-Lughod, 1991; Bailey et al., 1999a, 1999b; Baxter & Eyles, 1997, 1999; Bradshaw & Stratford, 2005; Clifford, 1986; Mountz, Miyares, Wright & Bailey, 2003).

My success in ‘the field’ hinged on my adoption of feminist methodologies. According to Faye Harrison (2008, p. 25), “feminist methodology clues us in on which combination of methods is likely to be most suitable for meeting the pragmatic and ethical objectives of a feminist research project.” To be clear, I did not choose this approach simply because I am a woman, but rather because it encouraged effective research practices and allowed for reflections on the inequalities between different members of society I encountered (Browne, 2003; Kobayashi, 1994; Mountz et al., 2003; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). As Joseph Conti and Moira O’Neil (2007, p. 65) explain, “[f]eminist methodologies provide valuable insights that are crucial in the study of global power...that [is a] theory of research rather than a specific method or technique for gathering information.” Moreover, I trusted that embracing such practices created more

equal relationships between myself and each participant (Madge et al., 1997). In addition, when rethinking ‘development,’ I must acknowledge that women from the Global South are influentially shaping strategies of resistance around the world (Power 2003). Specifically, feminist methods “can be used to show the traditional isolation of Guatemalan women within the private domain and show the forces behind the move to the public sphere” (Reade & Nolin, 2008, p. 13). Chandra Mohanty (Mohanty cited in Escobar, 1995) states that women in the South are only seen in early feminist literature as having “needs” or “wants,” and as having no ability to change their own situation without aid from the North. In addition to this, Escobar (1995) also recognizes that we have historically compared women in the Global South with women in the Global North. I hoped instead to acknowledge both men and women in their vision of development and how it best suit their needs and their communities’ desires, rather than compare them to what is seen as a ‘development’ benchmark (Angeles, 2004; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Feminist research, as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999, p. 187) says, focuses “on issues of gender (not just of women).” In keeping with traditional Maya thought, I aim to look at both men and women as complementary forces in determining their own development (Tedlock, 1996).

Participants and Interviews

While staying in Peace House, Emilie’s knowledge of the people, the language and the tangled ways in which Guatemala operates was invaluable to my research. As Kevin Dunn (2005, p. 90) explains, “[d]ecisions about the selection of informants also

depend on your ability to gain access to people.” Emilie can be seen as my gateway into the communities of El Quiché. She and I identified key individuals with whom I wished to speak, some of whom I had been introduced to during the UNBC delegation in May, others whom Emilie could arrange a more informal meeting. We interviewed eight individuals who represent their communities and who are identified as leaders by Indigenous community members (Dunn, 2005). As I discovered, ballots and campaigns do not always determine leadership in an Indigenous Guatemalan community. Instead, any individual who holds an overwhelming respect among the population can be a leader. Respondents are Mayan spiritual leaders, healthcare workers, teachers, lawyers, and members of the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Quiché* and the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Occidente*. Leadership is also not bound by academic achievements, but rather by knowledge of the people and the history that surrounds them.

Peace House is known in the area as a central meeting place for many leaders in the community. During my fieldwork in September of 2010, people would pass through the house for meetings, counselling, religious ceremonies, visits, and to rest. By situating myself here, I quickly became a more familiar face and was able to engage with each visitor. Some recognized me from the UNBC delegation, while others did not. Thus, I made an effort with every potential participant to explain why I was in Guatemala for the second time. Eventually, we scheduled interviews with eight individuals. Once more, every interaction hinged on Emilie’s translation and constant praise of the work I was trying to accomplish.

Of course, not everyone was willing to participate in my study. Some refused because they did not like the idea of ‘being researched,’ while others did not have the

time to sit down for the interview. I had anticipated this problem, and also expected that some individuals might not want to participate, because of the potential danger these discussions represent for them. Guatemala is a place full of *justicia a mano propia* (vigilante violence) and with the current political and development climate surrounding Santa Cruz del Quiché, I had to think not only for my own safety, but also for the safety of those willing to be interviewed (Goldman, 1999; Manz, 2008).

Surprisingly, despite the potential danger, individuals who agreed to speak with me were very open to the public use of their names. Not one of the eight respondents wanted to use a pseudonym, and was happy to be identified as a contributor to my research. For the purpose of this thesis, I use their first names in capitals when identifying them or their words. This strategy makes participants easy to recognize within the text of my thesis and distinguished from other names that are presented.

I interviewed four male and four female research participants. I was interested to gain insight from each gender's perspectives, but it was mere fortune and timing that I was able to have meetings with an equal number of each. The men, ANÍBAL, DON JUÁN, DON LORENZO, agreed to meet Emilie and I at Peace House, while OSMUNDO preferred we travel to his village of Cunén for our meeting, a distance of some 68 kilometers from Peace House. The women, LOLITA and ISABEL, favoured to be interviewed at Peace House, as they frequent the House for meetings. Finally, DOÑA MAGDALENA and RONXOX invited me to take their *testimonios* at their family homes inside the city limits of Santa Cruz del Quiché. Interview lengths ranged from forty-five minutes to over two hours. The duration of each meeting depended on how much time a participant was willing or able to give; as community leaders, their time is valuable and I

was grateful for any opportunity they could spare to speak. As I was only able to have one interview with each participant; I had to make our conversations clear and to the point in order to gather information. Every interview was conducted via translation, changing back and forth between English and Spanish and often Quiché as well.

Before each interview started, I presented every participant with a Spanish-language permission form and an information sheet.³⁷ The document clearly outlined each respondent's rights: the right to participate; the choice of anonymity or use of his/her own name; to be listened to; to stop the interview at any point; to rescind the interview; to contact me afterwards; and to see copies of any tapes or transcripts I have made (Dunn, 2005). I also asked permission to tape or photograph them (Price, 2001). Again, I took the opportunity to explain my presence in Guatemala, and tried to be as rigorous as possible when explaining my research. Each participant was keen to know my personal story, and how I had learned about development. This process was insightful and allowed me to engage on a more personal level with each individual.

In my application to the Research Ethics Board (REB) of UNBC, I explained a common problem when informing each person of his/her individual rights as a participant. If I had presented a document that was written formally as a contract, I could have jeopardized to my relationship with an interview participant. In Guatemala, the government, NGO's, and corporations show up in communities to present their documents in the name of 'development.' By asking community leaders to sign my forms, I was replicating a power structure and perpetuating the 'insider/outsider' challenge that I explicitly make attempts to avoid. To overcome this obstacle, Emilie read aloud the documents I had brought in Spanish. Thus each participant gave consent

³⁷ The Reverend Smith translated all of my information and permission sheets from English to Spanish.

verbally. Moreover, one participant is unable to read and to ask that person to sign an information/consent form is unethical since she is unable to understand what was written.

I captured all verbal consent on an audio recorder along with the date of each interview. I then recorded all interviews with the audio recorder and a video camcorder. The use of both audio and video technology allowed me to examine my data at different levels. While the audio caught each translated and un-translated conversation word for word, the video caught gestures, facial expressions and physical anecdotes that I may have otherwise forgotten. I also kept a detailed journal filled with notes from interviews as well as reflections afterwards. I took great lengths to protect all the data I collected while in the field. While in Guatemala, I kept the audio and video recorders, as well as my notes, in a locked case inside of my private room. Upon my return to Canada the material remained locked in a secure location on campus. I feel that I conducted my research with the utmost respect and ethical conduct available to ensure that each respondent's safety and rights are well protected.

With the exception of DON JUÁN, I asked each research participant twelve specifically designed questions during the interview. DON JUÁN asked to see the interview questions in advance, so he could better prepare for our meeting. As he said "the Maya like to grind the corn three times before we make tortillas," meaning he wanted to take his time and think carefully about each response. Each of the remaining seven participants were asked the same questions, although at times, I rearranged or tinkered with the questions in order to fit each conversation. One particular problem that was presented to me by LOLITA during my first interview was the use of the word development. While this point will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five, I have

to acknowledge that the word itself was not always understood and thus the questions sometimes had to be moulded to fit each interview.

Risks, Reciprocity and Research Responsibilities

There are considerable dangers working in a country like Guatemala; risks both for participants and myself. The Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA (GHRC) (2010, p. 1) reports that:

[i]n the last ten years, assaults against human rights defenders have increased significantly. Indigenous leaders, community organizers, environmentalists, justice officials, journalists, union representatives, women's rights advocates, and church leaders have all suffered from these increased abuses while promoting and defending human rights in Guatemala.

From January to August of 2010, there were 223 aggressive attacks and 105 written threats delivered to individuals identified as being "human rights defenders" (GHRC, 2010, p. 1). Violence is used as a means to silence, intimidate and suppress those who defend Indigenous and human rights. In Guatemala, impunity remains the norm and violence against individuals goes unpunished in 99 percent of cases (GHRC, 2010). Furthermore, the same individuals who were responsible for act of genocide during the conflict are now running the government and military (Bellino, 2010).

Legal impunity for the criminals of the past has engendered a 'culture of impunity' that penetrates Guatemalan's everyday lives, diminishing trust in the government, justice system, and the role of the seemingly powerless citizens, conditions that have earned Guatemala the name 'Killer's Paradise' (Bellino, 2010, p. 14).

Despite the dangers, I was still able to interview community leaders in safe places and with discretion. I wish to acknowledge the courageous participants who still attempt to make changes in their communities despite the violence against them.

Each person I spoke to volunteered to sit down with me; they were not paid for their information through monetary means. The Indigenous people of El Quiché are proud individuals who are weary of outsiders offering gifts and promises. It was important to me that each participant knows how much I appreciated their time, so I chose to give gifts in kind. With Emilie's help, we offered tea and food to those participants who met us at Peace House, and provided *tuk tuk*³⁸ fare when interviews went late into the evening or if it rained. When I met a participant elsewhere, I made an effort to pay for their meal where we met, or offer compensation for their travels. As Catherine Nolin (2006, p. 24) says "[f]ieldwork reciprocity is vital to an engaged qualitative research project, most especially when participants are those often identified as 'living on the margins.'" Thus, I made every effort to thank my participants either verbally or through small gestures of hospitality.

As a Master's student, I was careful not to guarantee anything I could not deliver. This point is especially important when dealing with participants who have been promised 'development' by their government and outside organizations. Instead, my pledge was to listen and to amplify their voices in solidarity. The best way I can achieve this goal is to make my research as accessible to the public as possible. I cannot instantly make changes inside or outside of Guatemala, but I hope to publish my thesis to show my commitment to their struggles and need for change. However,

[t]he full measure of fieldwork is not simply the published article, but the entire process. The relationships established, the dialogues that ensue, the institutional means to support or publicize community issues or activities are all ways to acknowledge the kindness bestowed on us (Price, 2001, p. 150).

³⁸ A *tuk tuk* is a three wheeled vehicle used as a taxi service in populated areas.

It is of extreme importance to me to give back to the places where I was so warmly welcomed.

Coding and Thematic Analysis

Upon my return to Canada, I immediately transcribed the eight interviews. I used the audio recordings as a basis of my transcriptions, but at times would refer to the video footage to make sure I had translations correct. All of my interviews were conducted during Guatemala's rainy season, and at times, the rain would drown out the sounds in the interview. This problem was solved by going between both audio and video devices to ensure that I captured every word, inflection and emotion. Each interview was played multiple times over at varying volume levels, to catch words over the rainfall, children, animals or beeping vehicles. While this process resulted in long days of transcribing, I had the transcriptions finished within a two week period.

From this point, I moved onto thematic coding. Throughout this process I sought guidance from my supervisor Dr. Nolin while also relying on the texts of Kirby and McKenna (1989), Attride-Stirling (2001) and Hay (2005). Thus, my methods of thematic coding are a combination of these three sources and "what works best for you" as Dr. Nolin would say. I transcribed every interview into an individual Word documents and reviewed each document looking for key words that stood out from my initial literature review and interview questions. Words such as community, culture, development, education, government, hydroelectric, imposition, language, Maya, and mining are some of the words that participants mentioned. From these key words, I created an Excel

document to map out how many participants used them. For example, every participant uses the word development, while the word culture is used in only five of the eight interviews. I was able to create themes and sub-themes that crossed all eight interviews by focusing on the frequency of these key words and other key words in the transcripts.

I returned to the transcriptions and began coding key quotes that utilized the identified words in an effort to best explain each theme and subtheme. Coding was applied as follows:

I:6:53:24:1

The “I” stands for the first initial of the research participant. The first number, ‘6’ identifies which page the quote is found in the transcribed interview. The second two numbers “53:24” identifies the time in the interview when the respondent was speaking, and the ‘1’ indicates that this is the first quote used during the identified time. For each participant, the code changes to reflect who was speaking, and where the quotation was identified in the text. Once categorized, I moved the quotes into another Excel document where I could easily access them for analysis. The main themes are identified as: 1) The Word Development; 2) ‘Development’ as Invasion; 3) ‘Development’ as a Loss of Identity/Culture; and 4) The Right to a Self-Determined Way of Life. Theme number one, “The Word Development,” was the only pre-determined subject I inquired about during interviews. Themes two, three and four were highlighted by all eight Indigenous leaders as predominant issues needing to be further addressed.

I present the analysis of themes one, two and three as perceptions of ‘development’ in Chapter Five. There, specific quotations are used to best explain the themes and subthemes that emerged. This stage is known “to take the researcher deeper

into the meaning of the texts, the themes that emerged now have to be explored, [by] identifying the patterns that underlie them” (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 393). Following this, in Chapter Six, I connect Indigenous leader’s perspectives of a self-determined model of life with relevant literature. Through the use of direct quotations and well strategized arguments I attempt to strengthen my original research questions: What is development and development for whom?

Limitations

As a researcher, it is important to acknowledge my limitations and to address them. First, I must recognize that by speaking to eight Indigenous leaders, I can only capture the realities of ‘development’ from those who communicate perceptions and perspectives to the Indigenous leaders with whom I spoke. The credibility of my research centres on the knowledge “that there is no single reality but rather multiple realities” (Baxter & Eyles, 1999, p. 512). Thus, by speaking to individuals who represent large numbers of the Indigenous population, I attempt to capture as much of the Indigenous views as possible, though not homogenizing their experiences. At the same time, I realize some voices will continue to go unheard. If unlimited funding and time were available, I would be able to speak to Indigenous leaders and community members in areas outside of my initial study region. However, this is not the reality of my research, and the Indigenous Maya leaders with whom I spoke acknowledge this limitation too.

My understanding of the Spanish language is basic at best. With such a short timeframe for fieldwork, I was unable to spend time learning the national or local

languages. However, as Daniel Gade (2001, p. 376) explains, “[e]ngaging an interpreter is the best overall solution for short-term projects, assuming one keeps in mind that the informant is always more in tune with the interpreter than with the researcher formulating the questions.” The Reverend Emilie Smith generously agreed to assist me by translating both the questions and responses of my interviews. Of course, I realize that having a translator during this process may cause a distortion of the words, or the general perception of a respondent’s answer. To ensure that I receive the most accurate interpretation, I taped each interview with an audio recorder and video camera; both of which were only used with the permission of each participant (Gade, 2001). Geographer Daniel Gade (2001, p. 374) recalls that the use of a translator with local knowledge was a “bonus...[as his] assistant was also a good source of information about... life and its customs.” I trust my decision to employ Emilie as my translator, rather than hiring someone I did not know. Her knowledge of the community, the Maya way of life and the contemporary arena of Guatemala could not have been navigated by anyone who did not live it everyday. Hiring a community outsider would have compromised my study, and potentially could have placed me in danger.

Another drawback of my field research was the limited amount of time I spent in Guatemala. As Gade (2001) explains, “[i]deally, a foreign project should be about a year’s duration to permit a learning period before the real inquiry begins.” In total, I have spent less than two months in Guatemala between my two separate travels. For long-term studies, Stan Stevens (2001, p. 70) recognizes that fieldwork involves “earning rapport, research legitimacy, and access to knowledge from the people who may not welcome outsiders or research.” I understand this point, as some individuals refused to speak with

me. Ultimately, I gained access to communities and local knowledge structures through individuals who are living in the country, or are socially active in human rights issues in Guatemala for many years. Had I not know these individuals before going to Guatemala, it would have taken much longer to conduct my research. Also, I am a Master's student and not a Ph.D candidate; the timeframe I allotted for field study seems more appropriate for a Master's level study.

There is no single guidebook to fieldwork, according to Dydia DeLyser and Paul Starrs (2001, p. VI), “[f]or fieldwork is not innate but learned” through first hand experience. As such, each research experience is intrinsically unique. I made a scholarly effort to create timelines, research strategies, and plans, but in the end the one element I needed more than anything was flexibility (Baxter & Eyles, 1999). With empathy, Kathleen Parker (2001, p. 168) defends that “[a] basic tenet of field research is that unforeseen difficulties will arise during data collection.” Guatemala is no exception to this rule. Daily, I was changing well-conceived plans to adapt to my surroundings. Participants were often late, causing more than one participant to arrive at a time or leaving me waiting for hours on end. Emilie's position in the community would call her away from time to time. In Guatemala, the rainy season is unforgiving. Torrential rains cause road blockages, and even catastrophic flooding. The Indigenous leaders I interviewed would go to offer support to community members when natural disasters occurred. Children were sometimes present in interviews, and would find my instruments fascinating enough to touch and push buttons while I was recording. All of these problems were navigated, and were essential parts of my growth as a researcher; “fieldwork is about facing challenges and doing things you might not normally do”

(Bullard, 2006, p. 62). Emilie wisely said to me after overcoming one particular roadblock, “what is suffering today, will seem like an adventure tomorrow,” and that is what fieldwork is – an adventure!

Chapter 5: Analysis - Perceptions of ‘Development’

Introduction

In this Chapter, I aim to amplify³⁹ the voices of my interview participants. Here, I reflect on my discussions with each of the eight Indigenous Maya leaders, as well as highlight some of the key issues they addressed. Overall, through the use of observation and interviews, this Chapter unearths how the process of ‘development’ is felt by those being ‘developed’ in El Quiché. I aim to further explore my re-thinking of ‘development’ (Power, 2003) to add to existing literature. In the following pages, I discuss four critical themes, which emerged from my analysis of the eight interview transcripts, and support these findings with scholarly literature. These themes are: 1) The Word Development; 2) ‘Development’ as Invasion; 3) ‘Development’ as a Loss of Culture and Identity; and, 4) The Right to a Self-Determined Way of Life.

The themes in Chapter Five express perceptions of ‘development’ in the Guatemalan context. Chapter Six will focus on perspectives of how ‘development’ can be achieved through a Maya vision of life.

³⁹ As mentioned in Chapter One and Four, I use the word “amplify” as the result of a discussion between the Reverend Emilie Smith and myself. As the Reverend Smith (Smith, personal communication, August 18th 2010) describes: “We need to be careful around the way we understand our role in relationship with those we are working and living with. The people of Quiché don’t need us to empower them. Also they are not voiceless. Our role, as members of the Global North exploiting societies is to unstop our own ears, and the ears of our country-men and women, so we can hear the voice of those who are already empowered and speaking.” Thus, I use the term “amplify” as a way to make my interviewees’ voices heard.

The Word Development

1. What does the word development mean to you?

Like me, ANÍBAL often ponders the significance of the word development. After I asked, “What does the word development mean to you?” he took his time, and closed his eyes contemplating what the word development meant. ANÍBAL, with his eyes shut, softly said, “*desarrollo es*” which translates from Spanish to “development is,” and paused again before sharing his thoughts. The image of ANÍBAL’s reflection stays with me and I remember his actions whenever someone asks me the importance of the word development. I wish to discuss these themes the way ANÍBAL does, with careful reflection before answering.

In Chapter Two, the Western definition of the concept of development is discussed. Upon my arrival in Guatemala in May 2010, I assumed that the word development was easily translated, and its meaning transcended each language. While this interpretation may seem naïve, it is a common misconception. Organizations and corporations use a Western and Anglicized definition of development to justify their implementation of policies, projects and programs (Escobar, 1992a; Esteva, 1992; Power, 2003; Thomas, 2000a). For instance, a clear example of the use of the word development can be seen in the region of El Estor towards Guatemala’s Eastern coast.



Figure 5.1 El Desarrollo.
The sign reads: “Development is the new name of peace.”
Source: Nolin, 2010.

Here, the word development is used as a synonym for peace by CGN (the Guatemalan subsidiary of Canadian mining company HudBay Minerals Inc.) in an attempt to ‘develop’ the people and the region from a Northern perspective. An image like this shows how the Global North may understand development to have positive meanings (Thomas, 2000a). However, I decided this view was not enough, and devised my thesis around the lived experiences of those who endure ‘development’ on a daily basis.

During my second visit to Guatemala, to conduct my fieldwork, I anticipated the contested nature of the concept of development. However, I had not predicted the extent to which development as ‘lived’ was inherently flawed in the eyes of the Quiché leaders. Earlier I assumed, like many Northern institutions and corporations still do, that development was a term or concept used in every language, and generally had a positive

characterization (Power, 2003; Thomas, 2000a) During an early morning interview at Peace House, LOLITA⁴⁰ took her time explaining her understanding of the term development Piece by piece, I was beginning to comprehend the imperfection of the concept itself She described how she first heard of development in her daily life

[T]he word development, I hadn't heard it much before It was different because these things and this word didn't exist in our communities In my language, in the translation of my language, this word doesn't translate well So the word itself is a problem⁴¹

LOLITA is bilingual, speaking both Spanish and Quiché, one of 22 Maya languages (Little & Smith, 2009, p 89) To say that development does not "translate well" meant to her that it is a word that was introduced, even imposed DON LORENZO shared a similar experience As a social promoter, he endorses the involvement of the Maya people inside and outside of their communities This man is an authority on the Indigenous Maya world and the Quiché language

First of all, this word, is a Western word, it's not a Mayan word But we are using it, knowing all the different processes that the Mayan communities have been carrying out from thousands and thousands of years ago⁴²

Development is not a word in the Quiche tongue, as DON LORENZO explains, it is an imposed concept from the Global North The term itself has been altered to be synonymous with economic 'progress,' or 'growth' (Power, 2003, p 2, Thomas, 2000a, p 23, Desai & Potter, 2002, p 2) Alternatively, the word development represents a

⁴⁰ In this thesis, all participants will be referred to by their first names, in CAPITALS This method is used to distinguish research participants from other names published in this document Each participant gave full consent to use real names and to the use information gained from the interviews in this thesis

⁴¹ Each quotation has been verbally translated from its original Spanish and/or Quiche during the interview by Reverend Emilie Smith, Director of Peace House I do not wish to overshadow Reverend Emilie's invaluable contribution of these discussions Thus, I wish to acknowledge her contributions to the translation of every interview quotation from this point forward

⁴² Each quotation is translated verbatim and unchanged from the Reverend Emilie Smith's words Mentioned in Chapter One, I use the word 'Maya,' rather than "Mayan," as each participant identified themselves as Indigenous Maya in Spanish However, during translations, Emilie used the word "Mayan" rather than "Maya" Each quotation will be kept in its original translation

change of a more physical kind. As discussed with DON LORENZO, development is connected with the natural growth of a human being. He says,

so we have thought about development, it's a process of growing, which comes from a human concept from when the mother is bearing her child, and in our Quiché language that's when the beginning happens, is from when a child is in the mother's womb, that's the beginning.

This physical development is a parallel with nature instead of the human-made goals the Global North equates with development (Tedlock, 1996).

Many community members do not recognize the Western definition of development. DOÑA MAGDALENA never attended school, but worked as a nurse in the region of Santa Cruz del Quiché until the early 1980s. She taught herself to count and carry out basic math skills, but when asked what the meaning of the word development is, DOÑA MAGDALENA looked unsure of how to answer. As we sat in the courtyard of her home, she responded to my inquiry with another question.

What is development? I don't really understand. So I am asking, am I supposed to speak as a leader in my community, from my family, as myself? I just hear this word, but I have never understood what it meant.

As DOÑA MAGDALENA represents members of the population who did not attend school, it is likely that many more community members share in her perspective. Lack of understanding the term development is not a sign of 'backwardness' as analyzed by Gustavo Esteva (1992, p. 11; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004), or 'underdevelopment' (Escobar, 1992a, p. 22); instead it exemplifies a larger problem with the term itself. Development as Wolfgang Sachs (1992, p. 1) says, "is much more than just a socio-economic endeavour; it is a perception which models reality." Moreover, the term has

created objects out of those perceived as ‘underdeveloped’ by Global North, rather than subjects of a self-determined model of life (Esteva, 1992).

Together, DOÑA MAGDALENA, LOLITA and DON LORENZO all stressed how the Western perception of the word development is understood by the Indigenous Maya from multiple viewpoints or sometimes not at all. Development theory and practice, explained by Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2000) is seen as being the nexus for cultural Westernization and homogenization. The dominant approach in the Global North, sees development as the progression of economic, environmental and capitalist goals creating a position of power (Fagen, 1999; Sadar, 1999) over ‘the other’ (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997b; Power, 2003) by describing countries like Guatemala ‘undeveloped’ (Escobar, 1992a, p. 22; Gordon & Webber, 2008; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004, p. 42; Schrijvers, 1993, p. 9; Thomas, 2000a). Again, this is one of the biggest problems with the term development, is it does not have one universal meaning. LOLITA explains that to her community, development means to be liberated from outside forces imposing ‘development’ and instead free to decide the path that best suits everyone’s future. She says,

we could say that our model of life is like this, and we can explain it. But [community members] say models of development already has a really strong and violent impact on our culture, so it has a negative impact maybe for some, and turns the life over, destroys the life of others. So the word itself is a problem.

There are gaps in the meaning of development between members of the Global North and Global South (Thomas, 2000a). This point highlights the argument from Chapter Two, that ‘development’ is imposed and is not always received positively by members of the community (Thomas, 2000a). We cannot assume a textbook world, as John Abell (1999, p. 40) explains. Instead, we need to approach development from alternative perspectives;

to inquire about the meaning of development, about the production of knowledge structures, about who decides and who has the power to make development a reality (Esteva, 1992; Fagen, 1999, p. 182). I want to know whose development vision are the Maya living (NISGUA, 2010).

2. The Maya Vision of Development

I was curious to know the Maya perception and perspective of development. As LOLITA pointed out, it is not ‘development’ that the Maya believe in, but rather a ‘vision of life’ for all. This philosophy comes from the Maya book called the *Popol Vuh*, or the “Council Book,” which portrays the Quiché story of creation (Huff, 2006; Tedlock, 1996, p. 21). This way of being is followed by many of those who consider themselves Indigenous in Guatemala. While visiting the village of Cunén, community leader OSMUNDO revealed to me the collective dream of the Indigenous population. With great pride he said,

[t]he Mayan concept is that everyone, everyone is the same in the development. So for example, if I’m a lawyer, and he’s a doctor, an engineer, a teacher, and this development has to be all of us moving forward together. It’s not allowed that one will be economically more developed than the others and still suffering in poverty. That is impossible for us. As the *Popol Vuh*, the sacred book of the Mayan [sic] Quiché, says that everybody rises up and not one person is left behind. The *Popol Vuh* calls us to unity, so that no one is left behind, that means no one is left behind in poverty.

No matter a person’s gender, social status, or occupation, the Maya believe that the community is only healthy, if its population remains in harmony (Falla, 2001; Viaene, 2010). No room exists for greed or jealousy within the community. Instead, a goal exists for equality and an agreement between individuals that fosters unity for their society.

They believe that the actions of a single person have an effect on others and all elements on earth play a role in maintaining balance (Viaene, 2010) As OSMUNDO points out,

[t]he word development means a lot of things When we speak of development that means that all of the population is well

OSMUNDO says, knowingly leaving just one member of a society in poverty reflects an overall failure of that community's commitment to one another and success for the future (Falla, 2001)

My interview with LOLITA was memorable, not because of *what* she said, but *how* she said it LOLITA is the coordinator of the *Consejo de los Pueblos del Quiché* (Council of the Peoples of Quiché) (Mimundo, 2010) During our interview, she responded to every question with an animated anecdote, as I had seen her do while speaking in public

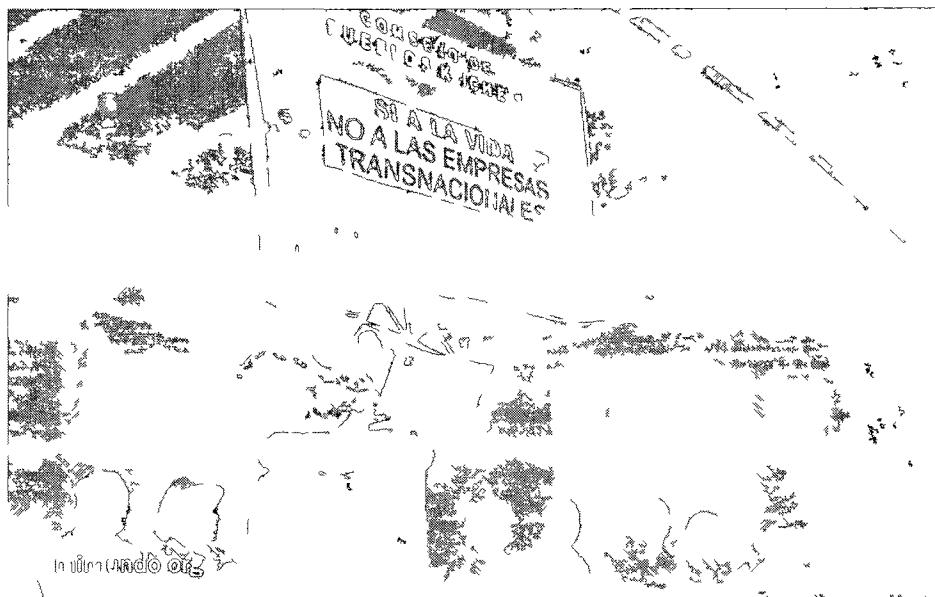


Figure 5.2 LOLITA

LOLITA (centre front) stands to read the municipal Act number 62-2010 This photo was taken on the day of the October 22nd 2010 Santa Cruz del Quiché *consulta*
Source: Rodriguez, 2010

When asked about the Maya vision of life, she immediately directed me to her *hüipil*, or traditional woman's blouse.

[L]ook at this that I am wearing, and you can see that here, there are threads and a thread that moves in one place. If I move that thread, this thread is connected to others, so if I pull this, other threads here are going to move. So this is our existence, this is our commitment, my way of behaving, my attitude, my thoughts, my emotions; everything that I am is connected. And everything I do, everything I think, and everything that I don't do, move the other threads as well. And that is what we call '*utz kaslemal*' which in Quiché is to 'live well.'

Understanding that one's actions have an effect on another is a fundamental teaching in the *Popol Vuh* (Tedlock, 1996). Thus, the Maya remain very conscious of the influence they have on the earth both physically and mentally as every action has an equal reaction, be it positive or negative (Viaene, 2010). This vision of interconnectedness encompasses a "person-nature-community" relationship (REMHI, 1999, p. 52) within the Maya cosmovision.

To exemplify this point further, Maya spiritual leader DON JUÁN described the foundation of human interaction in the universe from an Indigenous perspective. His understanding of a person's position in the universe is fundamental to the Mayan experience of life and part of their vision when looking forward to the future.

It says that man, in Mayan cosmovision, man is one element, one more element within all of the elements, and is not the one, not the main one; it has a reciprocal relationship with everything. And that's where, the principles of harmony, unity, the balance are born.

DON JUÁN stresses that each person is a very small part of the universe, but can have a large impact on the world around them (Tedlock, 1996). As Lieselotte Viaene (2010, p. 12) explains, "in the [Maya] worldview or cosmovision, no distinction is made among the social, natural and sacred spheres that make up the cosmos." All interviewees explain their existence in a humble manner. They do not overemphasize their roles as humans on

the earth, nor do they place humankind on a pedestal above all other beings. They stress their 'way of life' to be an integral part of the universe (REMHI, 1999), ensuring the future wellbeing of humankind through ways unrelated to the market and "limitless growth" (Loomis, 2000, p. 903). When people forget this way of life, the earth becomes imbalanced, as OSMUNDO clarifies:

The Mayan concept of development, before the Spaniards arrived, the Maya had richness. The Spaniards came to steal everything. The gold, the silver, the Spaniards who came to Guatemala came to steal, they too destroyed every kind of development that we had, the Mayan community already had.

According to OSMUNDO, the Spaniards were victims of hubris, forgetting their place within the cosmos. When the Spaniards arrived in 1524, they created a "culture of terror" (Lovell, 1988, p. 28), greedy and obsessed with economic conquests. By coming to Guatemala, their actions caused an imbalance in the Maya way of life, and also started a conflict that would continue for centuries thereafter, the struggle to restore stability to the cosmovision of the Maya (Lovell, 1988, Smith, 1984). As RONXOX says,

[f]or example, there's a community member anywhere in Guatemala, if they don't have land, they don't have a place to live, they can't be developed as a person. And that is the vision that we are one with the earth, because that is in our subconscious, it's not our conscious mind, that Indigenous people we have our own relationship with nature.

The arrival of the Spaniards locked the Maya in the struggle to regain their Mother Earth that continues today (PBI, 2010).

According to each respondent, it remains important that the Indigenous population preserve their Maya culture by passing tradition and practices from their ancestors on to their children. According to the REMHI (1999, p. 52) the "Maya conceives his or her identity as a spiritual wholeness of belonging that encompasses both ancestors and living descendants." ISABEL enlightens me that,

the visions of the Maya... is that they don't lose their way of life, and their way of dressing, and their language, and their way of eating, and their way of agricultures. We are people of the land, and we can't stop eating what we understand to be sacred corn. [I]n the Mayan culture and cosmovision we are born of the earth and to the earth we return.

Each person is connected with nature, as there is a cycle of life that guides the Maya's spiritual journey on this earth (Falla, 2001). As Mario Blaser (2004, p. 26) explains, Indigenous people create a 'way of life' through "uniquely woven 'threads' of landscapes, memories, expectations and desires" that create both culture and identity. For example, ISABEL shares how the Maya take pride in their ability to farm and protect the land. The Maya preserve the environment and their culture by passing their practices onto the following generations with the hopes that it will continue as it has for thousands of years (REMHI, 1999; Tedlock, 1996). However, this continuation of life is threatened by external forces⁴³ (Power, 2003).

Each participant represents his/her respective communities. The participants are able to describe a collective vision of self-determined development that transcends each Indigenous population in the El Quiché region. Moreover, all of the interviewees expressed how the Maya concept of equality is present in their daily lives and permeates every aspect of the cosmos (Falla, 2001). Predominantly, OSMUNDO, LOLITA, DON JUÁN and ISABEL all described this balance as an essential part of the earth from an Indigenous perspective. It is clear that the stability participants speak of has gone awry, because of external forces in the past, such as the Spanish invasion (Lovell, 1988) and the

⁴³ External forces were described by interview participants as the following External governments, such as the Spain, the United States or Canada, International governance institutions, such as the World Bank, IMF, or United Nations, International Non-government organizations, such as Oxfam, or Amnesty International, Transnational corporations, such as GoldCorp, INCO, Glamis Gold or any companies that promote 'development' through mining, hydroelectric dams, or megaprojects, and any nation, international institution, transnational corporation that promotes 'development' either on paper or in practice forces that are macro economic, capitalist, neoliberal or globalizing in nature

recent imposition of transnational corporations (Nolin & Stephens, 2010), attacking their traditional way of life (PBI, 2010). When speaking about present day ‘development’ OSMUNDO explains,

It’s really what we call the second invasion. So the second invasion, only it’s a bit different. So now people come with economic power, so you know where there is dough, money, that means a lot of things.

Participants speak of a return to equilibrium within the cosmos that is difficult to attain (Loomis, 2000), as external groups have been unbalancing their lives for centuries (Lovell, 1988). As ISABEL plainly puts,

We spoke... [about the way] our culture thinks of things, respect, respect towards human beings and respect towards nature, the whole cosmos.

Each interview participant expressed a respect towards alternative visions of life, but articulates the importance of preserving their own culture. Loomis (2000, p. 896) argues that promoters of mainstream ‘development’ think Indigenous peoples are “focusing on political agendas and resisting development for the sake of resistance, or at least reacting defensively to the impacts of globalization on local culture.” Participants in my research desire nothing more than the right to self-determined development to protect the Maya culture and identity for their children (Blaser et al., 2004, 4; Loomis, 2000). I believe the Maya’s peaceful expressions of life must not be confused with standing in the way of ‘development’ as mainstream practitioners imply.

3. The View of Development by the Community

The Indigenous population comprises 89.7 percent of the overall population in El Quiché (PBI, 2010). Thus, it was not surprising to hear some respondents describe

aspirations of community development that reflected similar views illustrated by the Maya vision of life. Spiritual leader DON JUÁN took our conversation very seriously, and prepared his answers well in advance by consulting one of his favourite development books: *Debates Sobre Desarrollo: La Visión de la ONU y la Cooperación Internacional* / Debates on Development: The Vision of the UN and International Cooperation (2007). Throughout the conversation, he read from this book, and then provided his opinion on the subject of development. When asked to give an observation of his community, he described the distinct visions he had witnessed.

[O]ne thing I would call ‘traditional development’, which is here and it is focused in individualism and a dominion over nature. So what does this mean? This kind of development does not answer the truth, the true needs of a real community, which is the people. So, but the Indigenous peoples we present our vision in relationship with ‘true development’ and we say it should be pluralistic development, a harmonic development.



Figure 5.3. DON JUÁN.
DON JUÁN (far right) conducting a ceremony to welcome 13 new children into a community with white rose petals.
Source Smith, 2010.

DON JUÁN expresses a divided view within the community. Some members follow the Maya spiritual path, promoting equality and harmony with nature (Falla, 2001, Loomis, 2000). He continues to say,

as Indigenous peoples we believe our organization, our social, political and our economic model in collectivity and community life and shared life, and shared life with nature. If it's true, we can look for complementarity, the same should be served to hide these differences while that modern development is based on individualism. And the sphere of private spaces, and the dominion that these exercise over nature, and for these Indigenous people propose a pluralistic development which promotes the shared living and enrichment, a mutual enrichment between cultures and the communities.

To DON JUÁN, people who are focused on individual needs and wants that do not include the greater good of society (Blaser et al., 2004). As Mario Blaser (2004, p. 27) says, Indigenous people have been treated like nature by internal⁴⁴ and external forces, as “something to dominate” in the name of progress.

DON JUÁN emphasizes the prominence of this division within the community, just as RONXOX does. She describes a division of views within the community as we converse:

For the community vision of development, is what I said to you at the beginning, that is broken into pieces, is divided. The spiritual matters, human beings – globalization has made that we don't understand this integrated development as a community. The few communities that care about these human needs is because they have information about their rights, they know their rights.

RONXOX addresses how globalization divides her community just as DON JUÁN calls “traditional development” the problem separating his. Neoliberal policies in Guatemala opened up the nation to a capitalist market (Keeling 2004) and the violent forces of globalization (Schrijvers, 1993, Shiva, 2001) that have imposed market led strategies.

⁴⁴ Internal forces are understood as the following: The Guatemalan government in past or present form, The Guatemalan military, Guatemalan based non-government organizations, and Ladino/Mestizo populations.

reflecting the interests of the few as opposed to the masses (Thomas, 2000b). While elites and international institutions promote the economic practices designed by the Global North (Escobar, 1988), COPAE (2008a, p. 29) reminds us that the Maya aspire to live without “ambition or desire for luxury or power, and with a spirit of justice, caring for our natural resources, solidarity, tenderness, respect for nature, and contemplative gratitude.”

ISABEL knows this rift between community visions on a very personal level. Her village of Cantón Quiacquix is socially ruptured by a division of development perspectives. Her story reflects how Maya communities have turned against one another in an attempt to preserve their livelihoods. She demonstrates how diverse views of development can not only cause divisions within a village, but can also bring violence to neighbouring towns that do not share in a unified vision. This division is the result of “[i]ndigenous lands and resources... [being] susceptible to seizure either in the name of the greater good, for an abstract ‘all,’ or their own presumed benefit” leaving communities frustrated and landless (Blaser et al., 2004, p. 3). ISABEL recalled how her father had been a leader in their village some years before, and how his dreams of development were achieved by paving a road and building a community centre within the region. However, not everyone in the community agreed with his visions.

So the paving project was done, and fifteen days were left to inaugurate the project when my father was killed. They poisoned him. It's because of this project. He'd been threatened, all the committee had been receiving threats on a number of occasions... 98 percent of the people were in agreement with the project. But these five families took my dad's life. And we don't really know who did it, but because of the threats he received we guess it must have been them. And my father was poisoned. He died at home, but nobody noticed when he died, and we don't notice who gave him the poison... So it was May four years ago, and he was a great leader, he loved these kind of projects. And when he died, he was the dad of the whole community. And now we said, 'what are we going to do?' He was so smart and so wise he had a lot of development in the community.

Through her tears ISABEL told me the story of her father's murder. In Guatemala, development is a life or death situation; what starts as a killing in cold blood, unfolds tiers of contemporary violence, struggles for identity in a post-conflict environment (Abell, 1999; Benson et al., 2008). "Lack of accountability for past and present violence has created an environment in which violence is permitted, if not provoked, by the implicit guarantee of impunity" as Michelle Bellino (2010, p. 15-16; Simon, 2010) explains. The struggle for existence has turned communities against one another (Ancknerman et al., 2005; Benson & Fischer, 2009). ISABEL's personal experience of division is supported by DON LORENZO and DOÑA MAGDALENA, but neither shared such a painful experience as ISABEL. Inspired by Post-development thinking, I would argue that if 'development' works in such unjust ways and continues to promote violent struggles for existence, then 'development' has clearly failed (Esteva, 1992; Sachs, 1992; Thomas, 2000a).

In some communities, divided views between members have collectively weakened their strength as a society. In order for there to be a Maya vision of life, according to ANÍBAL, there must also be a common goal. The Maya have a defined vision of life that was discussed earlier, but as mentioned, not every community is exclusively Indigenous. In areas where competing ideas of development exist, the Maya are left at the margins of 'development' practice (Tucker, 1999, p. 19). ANÍBAL says,

development within the community really hasn't emerged. So the communities continue on the same path. Poverty has gotten worse. And extreme poverty has gotten worse. So development hasn't arrived.

ANÍBAL watches countless communities sink deeper into poverty despite community efforts of creating a unified vision for living. The country is controlled by the elite

classes, who make up 15 percent of the population, but control 60 percent of the national income; the poorest fifth shares a mere five percent (Benson et al., 2008, p. 50). The problem continues when competing forms of ‘development’ are introduced, either from internal community members, or external sources. Only the rich and powerful can promote development, and these individuals create policies that benefit themselves over the population (Thomas, 2000b). Both ANÍBAL and LOLITA work and live within predominantly Maya communities and witness their populations rally together to create harmony and unity. LOLITA expresses that,

[t]he model of life is imagined from the very way of co-existing. With all of the elements that exist around us in our daily life, with a harmonic balanced existence, and with a way of acting, with values and principles that our grandmothers and grandfathers have given to us. For example, we say those who live in the communities and those who are in the capital city of Guatemala, we are complementary we say. They say we are opposite, our ideas. So they say, this is bad, in the countryside and what is in the city is good. And what is ‘bad’ and what is ‘good?’ For example, we say there isn’t bad or good, it’s just different and it can be complementary. But this is caused these collisions, and the Mestiza people and the Mayan people have different values for example. But we can be complementary, but this has not been allowed to be like that.

‘Co-existing’ only works if there is mutual respect for differing ways of existence. The Maya regard humans as the “generators” of balance between humankind and nature (PBI, 2006, p. 20). Just as LOLITA asks me,

what is bad and what is good? For example, we say there isn’t bad or good, it’s just different and it can be complimentary, but this has not been allowed to be like that. But so ever since the invasion it has been developing like that.

The Maya leaders with whom I spoke talked openly about different religions and alternative ways of living that they have seen integrated into their communities. Garrett Cook (2000, p. 187) suggests thinking of the Maya community as a single tree with many branches. The metaphor illustrates how different ways of living are all connected to a common vision for the future, and the strength of a community. LOLITA described this

process to be one sided, meaning that Maya communities have been forced to adapt, but non-Maya areas do not integrate Indigenous traits into their visions of development

I found understanding the view of development from a community perspective a difficult task Roger Plant (1998, p 81-82) clarifies that after the Peace Accords,

[s]ome [I]ndigenous peoples place relatively greater emphasis on the need to combat discrimination and to enable them to participate on an equal footing within national society and all its institutions, with full respect at the same time for [I]ndigenous values and institutions Others place more emphasis on the right of [I]ndigenous peoples to reconstruct and revitalise their own institutions, to exercise autonomy and self-government, self-management, self-development and self-determination

ANÍBAL and LOLITA express that certain people are forgotten at the margins of ‘development’ rather than included as active participants in their own future (Esteva, 1992, Loomis, 2000, Tucker, 1999) Additionally, individual communities, such as ISABEL’s hometown, perceive a threat to their very existence, and in an attempt to survive, they continue a cycle of violence to ensure their way of life ISABEL’s story is an example of how the “neoliberalization of violence”⁴⁵ (Benson & Fischer, 2009, p 153) is expressed in everyday forms and inaccurately blamed on individuals Benson and Fischer (2009) say the practice of neoliberalism in Guatemala transforms the social structure of communities, ““thus explaining the persistence of its effects even in settings where all those who survived the initial violence have departed or died, or were new non-state forces predominate in decision making processes”” (Godoy cited in Benson & Fischer, 2009, p 153) ISABEL’s story is an extreme case, but not unfamiliar in the highlands of Guatemala The invasion of Indigenous space in Guatemala is a five centuries-long struggle for Maya survival (Lovell, 1988) Views of contemporary

⁴⁵ “Neoliberalization of violence’ is described by Benson and Fischer (2006, p 93) as an attack on human rights workers, judges, union organizers, and activists by groups who exercise coercive force outside of the state In this case, the Guatemalan government’s function of force is removed, and replaced with these ‘clandestine terror attack squads’ (Benson & Fischer, 2006)

‘development’ are a spin on the patterns of history that have shaped this area of the world, or as William Faulkner would say, “the past is not dead... [i]t is not even past” (Faulker cited in Gregory, 2004, p. 6; Lovell, 1988). Today, the Indigenous leaders of El Quiché believe that the Maya and the Mestizo can live in harmony together, but the Maya are driven to fight for their way of life (Mychaejko, 2005). Walter LaFeber, (1984b) comments that as power remains concentrated in the hands of the few, social conditions will continue to deteriorate to the point where the Maya are pushed so far, they will do anything to change their circumstances – to change the conditions in which they live.

‘Development’ as Invasion

[I]t’s an economic development that comes from outside but doesn’t benefit the whole community or even a whole country.
RONXOX

1. Imposing ‘Development’

The application of ‘development’ from Northern countries and institutions is seen as invasion according to my interviewees. LOLITA says,

daily... these ideas are forced on us, but with different focuses, and different messages and different ways.

As participants pointed out, development is a Western term that is imposed on the Indigenous Maya. “The real power of the West is not located in its economic muscle... [r]ather it resides in its power to define” (Sardar, 1999, p. 44). Visions from the Global North complement policies of economic prosperity and growth that does not include self-determined visions of life reflected in the dreams of the Indigenous population (Blaser,

2004). “Life-projects” as Blaser (2004, p. 26) calls them, are embedded in local history and include a vision of the world and future that is distinctly different than those created by the state or market. Sadly, this is not a new phenomenon, as both OSMUNDO and LOLITA explain. The concept of ‘being developed’ reached the Maya when the Spanish conquistadors landed in Guatemala centuries ago (Lovell, 1988, 2000) and centuries later, the same problems of ‘development’ still exist (Anckermann et al., 2005). OSMUNDO describes the first invasion:

The Spanish came to steal everything. The gold, the silver, the Spaniards who came to Guatemala came to steal, they came to destroy every kind of development we had; the Mayan community already had. So it’s still really hard for us to get out of this problem that they came to impose on us.

Before the Spanish, the Maya had their own ways of life, ways of living and aspirations for future generations to follow the visions of existence that their grandparents forged. As Carol Smith (1984, p. 199) describes, “the Quiché people has achieved state-level integration before the conquest” albeit the Spanish considered the Maya as an object to dominate (Perera, 1993). Much like contemporary ‘development,’ the Spanish invasion marked a point in Maya history where they were distinguished as the ‘other’ (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997a, p. 46), or ‘traditional’ (Loomis, 2000, p. 896). As such, Guatemala is no stranger to invasion (Lovell, 1988, 2000; Perera, 1993), but as LOLITA explains, a shift is evident in the type of ‘development’ imposed. She talks about the Spaniards coming generations before and how historical conquests relate to ‘development’ in Guatemala today.

So in that time it was one way, and now it’s a different way, but it’s always this imposition and always it’s something violent. And what is imposed, and what is complementary for us, is oppositional to them.

To LOLITA, “them” is represented by the external forces bringing Westernized ‘development’ to Guatemala. Each era of ‘development’ causes the Indigenous population to struggle to maintain their culture, identity and Mother Earth (Carlsen, 1997; Handy, 1984, 2008; PBI, 2010; Perera, 1993). The Spanish came wanting gold and resources hundreds of years ago (Lovell, 1988). Today, transnational corporations come to Guatemala for minerals, petroleum and energy (Ali, 2003; Nolin & Stephens, 2010; Schrijvers, 1993; PBI, 2006, 2010). The ways in which ‘development’ is imposed has changed to include states, transnational corporations, and non-government institutions (Gordon & Webber, 2008), but superiority over the ‘Non-West’ is still a vital factor in Guatemala’s ‘development’ (Sadar, 1999, p. 44; Schrijvers, 1993, p. 9).

The invasion of ‘development’ hinders the Indigenous population in achieving their full vision of life. The Mayas’ existence is shaped by external forces and the Guatemalan elite controlling how the Indigenous people live (Blaser et al., 2004, p. 4; Lovell, 1988). According to interview participants, the Maya are not being ‘developed;’ they are being attacked by ‘development’ forces (Mychaejko, 2005).

Across the world, [I]ndigenous peoples have faced displacement, dispossession, cultural and physical genocide and exposure to great risk from all manner of activities that have been justified in terms of their contributions to industrialization, development and somebody else’s national (or even international) interests. (Howitt, 2001, p. xiii).

To me, this signals a need to re-thinking ‘development’ practices. ANÍBAL understands the need to re-evaluate ‘development’ within the country, even though he is not originally from Guatemala. He shares with me that he was born in El Salvador, and has lived in the country for more than half of his life. He is a community leader, and understands the workings of ‘development’ from a North/South viewpoint better than most people.

These so-called developed countries, U.S., Canada, Europe, tell us what to do. We have to figure out what it is that we here want to do, and we should do. And we hope for the help of others, we don't want them to tell us what to do, but we would like their help, *your* help, for example.

ANÍBAL pointed at me when he said this, his eyes wide and his tone serious. Of course, he is right. The United States had been in Guatemala since the beginning of the 20th century (Handy, 1994, 2008) and before that, Europeans had come to use land for their vast plantations (Handy, 1994). More recently, Canadian companies are perceived as invaders. In 1973, Canadian mining corporation INCO drafted the Guatemalan mining laws for licensing in favour of its own interests and those of foreign investors (Jonas, 1991; Handy, 2008; Imai et al., 2007, p. 105; Nolin & Stephens, 2010). Governments in Guatemala and the Global North have been orchestrating the expansion of markets to facilitate the growth of globalization, with the help of international institutions (COPAE, 2008a; Keeling, 2004; Mychalejko, 2005; Toye & Toye, 2004). Thus, the discourses of the government and international institutions make it hard for individuals and communities to define their own identities and interests in a capitalist environment (Escobar, 1992a).

DON LORENZO shared his insights as to why countries and companies have invaded Guatemala for centuries.

[T]hey are after the richness here. Our water, our wood, our forests, our lands, and what's underneath the earth as well. And that's why or how another war could begin with these interests, with this aggression and this fight for power over our land and our earth.

His observations partially answer the question: 'development for whom?' If the Global North is trying to bring 'development' to the South, it seems to come at a price for the Global South (NISGUA, 2010). Namely, as DON LORENZO says, in order for the Maya

people to be ‘developed’ they must sacrifice their earth, their Mother. The current neoliberal practices put extreme pressure on the physical environment and natural resources (Keeling, 2004). The demands of neoliberal/economic ‘development’ are a process to which the Indigenous population never consented (PBI, 2010) and as a result, the Indigenous people are now considered ‘problems’ (Gordon & Webber, 2008) or criminalized as resistors to ‘development’ when they stand up for their rights (Ali, 2003; Bastos, 2010; Benson et al., 2008; Hale, 2002). OSMUNDO echoes this reflection, as he describes the ways in which the Guatemalan people are treated. He illustrates how the Maya are tossed to the margins when companies and countries come to offer economic prosperity.

[O]ther countries they take advantage of our poverty and they take advantage of our natural resources. So never again are we going to be the objects of explorations and of negotiating for other companies!

According to OSMUNDO, the Maya are treated as though they are unable to make their own decisions. According to the Maya, ancestral lands rightfully belong to the Indigenous population (Perera, 1993, p. 8), not the transnational companies who purchase land from the government and take the earth away from the people. According to NISGUA (2010, p. 1), 67 percent of the land is owned by a mere two percent of the population. The REMHI (1999, p. 323) explains that “improved land distribution is not only a form of reparation but, more importantly, it is a way to avert new problems and social conflicts,” yet little has been done to address this problem. As OSMUNDO says,

if we go to the United States, the neighbour in the United States are more developed than in Guatemala, if we go to Canada the same thing, if we go to Spain, so we go to other countries, but Guatemala, and other countries, they take advantage of our poverty and they take advantage of our natural resources. So never again are we going to be the objects of exploration and of negotiating for other companies.

Countries such as United States and Canada, companies and institutions such as the World Bank or IMF, force neoliberal policies that reflect a wave of new imperialism that is foreign to the Indigenous Maya (Gordon & Webber, 2008). The decision making and implementation of megaprojects and programs is performed by the corporations and political institutions, rather than by the Indigenous people who live in the areas being ‘developed’ (Johnston & Garcia-Downing, 2004). Moreover, Nathan Einbinder (2010, p. 10) states that “neoliberal development ideology [has] result[ed] in thousands of dams, and other mega-development projects... funded and planned extensively by U.S. and European-based international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.”⁴⁶ The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is a private sector arm of the World Bank, loaned US \$45 million to Goldcorp’s Marlin Mine and endorses the resource extraction company on the World Bank’s website. If not financially, institutions such as the World Bank are supporting neoliberal economic models media approval (World Bank, 2004). No one has asked the Maya what they want or what they need. RONXOX says,

they’ve come to impose these ideas on us, these ways of life that aren’t our own.

External forces come to tell the Maya how to live (Thomas, 2000a), because in the past development decades, “[I]ndigenous people have been typified in colonialism and modernization theories as ‘traditional’ peoples clinging to past, who much undergo

46 In January of 1976, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) granted the Instituto Nacional de Electrificación (INDE) US \$105 million for the construction of the Chixoy Dam. The Dam caused the displacement of numerous communities, and resulted resistance and ultimately the massacres of Río Negro by Guatemalan military and police (Einbinder, 2010). As well, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), is a member of the World Bank responsible for approving a \$45 million loan to Canadian resource extraction company Goldcorp’s Marlin Mine in June of 2004 (Common Ground Consultation Inc , 2010).

inevitable change which will allow them to enjoy the supposed benefits of modern (Western) society” (Loomis, 2000, p 896)

Contemporary ‘development’ has been conducted by Northern countries and institutions, it entered by force, just as the Spanish came to Guatemala centuries ago. The Indigenous people of El Quiché never asked outsiders to come to their communities to tell them how to exist. Moreover, when foreign countries and companies came to Guatemala, they never inquired as to how they could assist the Maya to fulfill their own vision of life, which reproduces the system of power dynamics in ‘development’ (Canel et al., 2010, Escobar, 1995). No, external forces came to ‘develop’ the Global South in their image (Munck, 1999, Sadar, 1999, Schrijvers, 1993). As Esteva (1992, p. 9, Munck, 1999, p. 200) says “[t]he metaphor of development gave global hegemony to a purely Western genealogy of history, robbing peoples of different cultures of opportunity to define the forms of their social life.” DON JUÁN reiterates this analysis to me, and clarifies the effect it has on the Maya people:

Our Mother Earth is going to charge us for this. The consequences with our Mother Earth is this open bleeding that is happening all over the place. [D]evelopment was from above and came down below, you understand that, it came from outside to the inside. It was imposition, and arbitrary imposition: substitution of language, the culture, the technology, and the cultural productive practices, and political of Indigenous peoples.

As a spiritual leader, DON JUAN expresses the invasion of ‘development’ in a number of ways. Not only do the Maya lose their culture and identity (Escobar, 1988, 1995, Hettne, 2002, Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004), but the earth that they are so deeply connected with is left in a perilous state (Nolin & Stephens, 2010). DON JUAN believes people will be punished by the earth for damaging her, and that the Maya must continue to protect the globe for the sake of the environment and their livelihoods (COPAE, 2008a). He

continues to appeal to me, that the process of ‘development’ is top-down and enforced by Northern governments and institutions (Power, 2003). The “development as growth” approach (Aylward, 2010, p. 66; Esteva, 1992; Sachs, 1992; Thomas, 2000b) has failed to address key social issues in Guatemala, and continues to dominate a ‘top-down’ approach that excludes the Indigenous population (Handy, 2008; NISGUA, 2010; Power, 2003).

It seems, as RONXOX discusses, that people have forgotten what the vision of life is for the Maya because of generations of resistance from outside forces. The Maya are by no means extinct, or an ancient forgotten society, they have survived centuries of conquest (Lovell, 1988; Perera, 1993). As we sit together in her mother’s house, RONXOX becomes agitated thinking about how her people are losing their identity and how some have given in to the oppression inflicted upon them. Moreover, it seems acceptable for external forces to come and invade the Maya’s lands (COPAE, 2008a, 2008b; Haas, 2008; Lambert, 2004; PBI, 2010), because to them the Indigenous population is ‘underdeveloped’ (Escobar, 1992a). RONXOX says,

this is what we want, because that’s what they’ve come and to tell us, they’ve told us ‘this is what matters.’ This happens because, we have been suffering all our history, we have suffered these things, and we have forgotten some of the memories of our ancestors.... It was easier to come here to this country to these peoples to take advantage of these ‘developments’ instead of making the investment to make renewable energy.

She makes a valid point. Avenues of mainstream ‘development’ make it easy for foreign countries and multinational corporations to abuse the lands of so called ‘developing’ countries according to Joke Schrijvers (1993). “Natural resources are being exploited more than ever before; a result of the politics of debt and the related pressure on developing countries to generate income from exports” (Schrijvers, 1993, p. 15). As more

‘development’ from the Global North invades Guatemala, the Maya must continue to preserve their culture, as they are reduced to insignificant actors in market-led development tactics (Hale, 2002; Keeling, 2004).

2. ‘Development’ from the Government and Elites

The Indigenous leaders of El Quiché speak about being invaded by foreign countries, companies and institutions, but they also discuss their struggles against the Guatemalan government, and the elite class. LOLITA strongly says,

if we see the racist system, so those who have benefitted have been the non-Mayans, so the Creole groups, which were Spanish born here, the oligarchy families. Another characteristic that this system has is preference. The economic systems, political systems, social systems, and cultural, educational, political. Those who benefit from this, are those who benefitted from this way of classifying people. The patriarchal is men, women – so the benefit is men. In the racist system, those who benefit, Maya, Xinxa or Garifuna people? No, it’s the Mestizo. In the capitalist system, who benefits? The powerful families... those who have had economic power. So this system benefits, and those who have more money, they continue to get benefits, so this system it’s the man who benefits, and the Mestizo benefits.

This level of society is responsible for the invasive forms of ‘development’ that have been allowed into the country and for the encouragement of capitalist practices promoting the economics over human lives (Benson et al., 2008; Handy, 2008; Mychalejko, 2005; Thomas, 2000b). “In the past decade, Guatemala has seen a resurgence of right-winged political activity involving some of the leading culprits of the genocide” (Bellino, 2010; Benson et al., 2008, p. 46). The Guatemalan government is to blame for enforcing ideas of ‘development’ on the Indigenous population without consultation or discussion as to whom these changes best serve (Bastos, 2010; Carmack, 1992; COPAE, 2008a; Haas, 2008).

While economic control has replaced military coercion as the Guatemalan state erects a democratic veneer for international consumption, the current pattern of economic restructuring in the highlands... has been extremely successful in reducing the economic and political autonomy of... [Indigenous] communities (Smith cited in Benson et al., 2008, p. 52).

Each Indigenous leader was asked how the government plays a role in ‘development.’

The response was unanimous: the Guatemalan government and the wealthy elites are out for one thing – themselves.

ANÍBAL and DON LORENZO understand the dynamics of power within the country. Namely, they detail how authority in Guatemala is concentrated into the hands of the few families who have ownership over vast amounts of land and national companies (Benson et al., 2008; NISGUA, 2010). In addition, this influence has not been to the benefit of the masses, but rather remains to profit those in control (Mychalejko, 2005). ANÍBAL says,

Now our country is governed by certain elites and groups that aren’t looking for the development for everyone. They are looking for the development of little small groups.

Within the country, there are competing visions of life. From the viewpoint of the Maya, the Guatemalan government and elites hold the same individualistic values as the Western institutions and corporations invading their lands. DON LORENZO expresses his unhappiness with the situation when he says,

the government has sold their own resources, have sold their resources of the people. So in these agreements, they support the companies and not the consumers.

The oligarchy strongly supports neoliberal policies that “have led to an increase in inequality” (Bastos, 2010, p. 26). Thus, the elites are also guilty of enforcing a vision of ‘development’ that does not consider those being ‘developed.’ RONXOX explains,

if the profit goes to the state it never gets to the communities....obviously, this is what those who manage the economic resources want, they want to keep it in a few hands.

Instead, the Guatemalan government has been concerned with securing its place among the “global neoliberal economy” rather than reconstructing the social fabric of a nation (Bastos, 2010, p. 25). Moreover, the Maya will never directly be addressed through current ‘development’ policies because neoliberal objectives are macro oriented (Keeling, 2004) and countries such as the United States continue to reward Guatemala for their neoliberal reforms (Mychalejko, 2005). DON LORENZO affirms that this method has increased the wealth of the few, but left the remainder of the population in poverty.

[I]n Guatemala, is governed and owned by 35 families, and there’s 12 million people on the other side. And if we add these up, the wealth that is accumulated, the poverty is always much greater. The concentration of capital is always in the companies owned by the same rich people.

The Maya promote an alternative vision of life that does not fit into the present ‘development’ model practiced by the ruling elite. Instead, the Maya are promoting what is known as “post-development” (Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004, p. 52). According to Parpart and Veltmeyer (2004), Post-development calls for bottom-up participation by previously marginalized actors of ‘development’ (Esteva, 1992; Nederveen Pieterse, 2000; Sachs, 1992). As DON LORENZO expressed, the accumulation of wealth held by the few families in control of the country is still greater than that of the rest of the population combined. The vision of the people in power does not include the equal distribution of material prosperity. Instead it purposefully exploits the riches of a lush country to which the Maya are spiritually connected (Falla, 2001). The Indigenous population makes attempts to strongly speak out to the national government for a more humane development experience, but proposing a different model of development is an

attempt that falls on the deaf ears of the regime (PBI, 2010; Perera, 1993, p. 103; Warren, 1998).

The struggle for a self-determined way of living has become increasingly difficult over the years. The government has been adopting strategies to gain acceptance among the Indigenous population, by promising money, projects and employment to communities to get their votes (Benson & Fischer, 2009; Haas, 2008; Handy, 2008). However, political attempts to gain the admiration of the population has been done by institutionalizing the Maya into their policies, but promises remain vague or undermine community led initiatives (COPAE, 2008a; Hale, 2002; Handy, 2008). To explain, LOLITA shares how the government pretends to support the Indigenous communities.

[W]e could say that today the government has a Mayan face even, but at the same time, they are invading, they are imposing companies, laws, giving mining concessions, and petroleum concessions, hydroelectric megaprojects, genetically modified [organisms].

The policies within the government that were put in place after the Peace Accords in 1996 have resulted in shallow promises (Bastos, 2010). For example, in 1996, the ruling administration ratified the International Labour Organization's Convention No. 169. "Convention 169 establishes guidelines for protecting the rights and integrity of [I]ndigenous peoples, and it defines them as the main actors in their own development" (Mychalejko, 2005; Haas, 2008; PBI, 2006, p. 15). However, the government has openly continued to grant licenses to megaprojects, disregarding the rights of the Indigenous population outlined by the ILO (COPAE, 2008a). The government does not support the need for self-determined development as guided by the people (Haas, 2008). Instead the government tosses money at communities during election times, or only when the community begs for it, as ISABEL says:

[A] lot of times, for example if we look from the perspective of the governmental organizations, and they hand out roofing material to the women and they call that 'development.' And that's not the basis of truth and reality, it's just a superficial gesture.... The government never arrives to offer anything, 'here take this.' So the community is like a baby, it has to cry if it's going to get fed.

This statement speaks clearly about the role national politics play in communities. The government only allows for community growth, so far as it does not interfere with their own strategies of economic prosperity, by valuing trade over human rights (Shiva, 2001). Governments like Guatemala are "foreign-investment oriented," meaning the administration will support transnational corporations operating within it's borders with police and military despite the local population's resistance to the company's presence (Haas, 2008, p. 24). Through ISABEL's analogy of a populace crying like a child for attention, the Indigenous communities are ignored until the government can no longer disregard their pleas. Furthermore, according to ISABEL, the government insists that the donations it makes to the communities are out of generosity and compassion with the Indigenous people's situation. She perceives this as bogus charity, not as the government's duty to offer help with community growth and infrastructure. Thus the Guatemalan government fails to provide the basic needs and freedoms it subscribed to in signing the *Acuerdo de Identidad y Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas*/Accord on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Bastos, 2010, p. 24; Imai et al., 2007).

OSMUNDO, and his community of Cunén, have been getting the government's attention. While his community draws awareness to the issues of self-determined 'development' and the defense of Indigenous land, the elites continue to ignore their peaceful and legal protests (COPAE, 2008a; PBI, 2010). OSMUNDO says,

[e]very year, especially in the political campaigns, they talk about 'development,' a lot of promises, a lot of commitments made by the politicians who are now in office. And the

result is, the community and in my community there is no development. People live in poverty and in extreme poverty. So whose fault is that? That's my question. And the problem is, well what we call maybe the capitalist system, all of the big businesses are concentrated in the hands of a few people who have money here in Guatemala. And all the demonstrations, these are the inconformity, the unhappiness that the people have with the government. And what does the government do when the people rise up? They put the army and the police against the people who are just asking for their rights.

The Indigenous population is engaged in a battle of rights and cultural respect within the Guatemalan state (Nolin & Stephens, 2010, Warren, 1998). As the communities gain knowledge of their rights, they make attempts to express them in diplomatic ways, such as *consultas*⁴⁷. OSMUNDO and his community held their first consultation in the Fall of 2009 (only the second *consulta* in all of El Quiché) to show the government that the municipality did not accept the exploitation of Indigenous lands (PBI, 2010, p. 7). Cunén's population consists of approximately 32,903 men, women and children (PBI, 2010, p. 7). A total of 18,924 members of the community (58 percent) voted a unanimous "no" to invasive forms of 'development' in their territory (PBI, 2010, p. 7). Nonetheless, the government makes attempts to silence the people who stand up against it, meeting peaceful expressions of human rights with "violence on behalf of the company" (Haas, 2008, p. 25). It threatens the communities by force with the use of the military and the police who just decades before were attempting to exterminate the Indigenous population (Haas, 2008, Perera, 1993). "These *consultas* are regularly ignored or attempts are made to discredit them, and the votes are often held after the project has begun because the company did not consult the communities in the first place" (Haas, 2008, p. 25, PBI, 2010). Physical and psychological fear is a strategy still enforced today.

⁴⁷ *Consultas* are legal referendums under the ILO Convention 169. Voting is held by Indigenous communities to determine whether individuals approve of 'development' megaprojects on or near their traditional territory (Haas, 2008, p. 25). Since 2005, more than 46 communities have held *consultas* in which over 800,000 people have voted 'no' to invasive forms of development (COPAE, 2010, Benson et al., 2008, Haas, 2008, Imai et al., 2007, Mychalejko, 2005, NISGUA, 2010, p. 2).

by the elitist class towards the Maya people (Green, 2004). Leaders such as OSUMUNDO, ANÍBAL and LOLITA stand openly against these practices enforced by the government as a pillar of strength for the Indigenous people and for their rights to self-determined development (Imai et al., 2007)

3. 'Development' Imposed from Corporations and Non-Government Institutions

ANÍBAL lives what so many practitioners fail to recognize: that 'development' has been about meeting the needs of the Global North, rather than the goals of the Guatemalan people (Munck, 1999; Rist, 1999; Thomas, 2000b). He has seen economic strategies fail countless times over the decades, and yet the same policies are presently being pursued by international corporations and non-government institutions (Handy, 2008). The practices enforced by the Guatemalan government and ruling elites are a result of international 'development' strategies upheld by corporations and institutions from the North (COPAE, 2008a; Gordon & Webber, 2008; Keeling, 2004; Nolin & Stephens, 2010). "Those who funded, built and operate the enterprises associated with large scale development have some obligations to people whose lives and livelihoods were adversely affected along the way" (Johnston & Garcia-Downing, 2004, p. 227). The exclusionary practices neoliberal market and 'development' strategies leave the Indigenous population subjected to an economic model that threatens their way of life (Mychalejko, 2005; NISGUA, 2010; Viaene, 2010). Multinational companies, institutions and NGO's have taken advantage of the country for the benefit of businesses (Invest in Guatemala, 2008; Mychalejko, 2005; World Bank, 2009) and to the detriment

of the environment and culture of communities (Benson et al., 2008; COPAE, 2008a; Handy, 2008; Nolin & Stephens, 2010; PBI, 2006). Additionally, the Maya have been bombarded with strategies of 'development' that do not reflect the Indigenous way of living (NISGUA, 2010). This approach continues to remain "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" by people in the Global North (Kirzner, 2010, p. 2).

The Maya of El Quiché live this exclusion daily. Initially, contemporary 'development' strategies were forced by international institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, in an attempt to solve "problems" like Guatemala (Escobar, 1988, p. 430, 2004; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004; Toye & Toye, 2004). Today, multinational corporations play a key role in this strategy, but 'development' from business does not benefit local Indigenous groups or the country (Haas, 2008, p. 24). ANÍBAL explains his perception of imposed 'development' in Guatemala.

In 1960, there was something called the Alliance for Progress The program of progress for all of Latin America, imposed by John F Kennedy And how did that end up? Nothing! After 1970 with the great depression in finances over the oil crisis, they said it was the opportunity for our development Because we had a potential export, something they needed in the North And how did that end up? NOTHING! NOTHING! And now? What do they say? We have a great potential in mining, and how is that going to end up? I can only imagine Guatemala in 20 years as a big mining development, and I see Guatemala destroyed And it's not just mining, the mines, the gas, the plantations for biofuels, it's all this together And none of this is for us This is development, that is 'development' It's really hard, it's hard to know what this is what it's like, and we want to have no chance to organize this in a different way, this development for us It's really hard

The Indigenous people are unable to change their situation without the acknowledgement of those imposing 'development,' because as ANÍBAL says, unless you watch the destruction of the environment and the Maya population from the ground level, it is difficult to comprehend I feel, like ANÍBAL, that this is a very real problem that is the base of critical development thinking and concur with G.H Fagen (1999, p. 186): "if

development is to have real value at the local level it requires a qualitative understanding of the complexities and dynamics of everyday lives.” The companies and institutions enforcing the economic model, do so from a desk from the Global North (Abell, 1999). Thus, a re-thinking of these practices involves the perspectives of those being ‘developed’ just as ANÍBAL has described, as one that is more pluralistic and less oppressive (Escobar, 1988).

Institutions in the Global North need to evaluate the policies and practices they have been imposing on the Global South. Development has been viewed by organizations in the Global North as serving the greater good (Thomas, 2000b), but so far, areas of the world have been continuing to fall deeper into poverty and have less control over their own futures (Angeles, 2004; Loomis, 2000; Thomas, 2000a). For instance, DON LORENZO reflects on how Guatemala was at one point a priority for institutions to fund development projects, but the money came with implications.

It creates what we call paternalism. It doesn’t give space for people to think or oppose. So after the Peace Accords were signed, a lot of these financial agencies, they gave money out as if we were breaking a piñata. And millions and millions of dollars were spent, the communities are just the same, or worse off.

The Indigenous people have no control over funds given by institutions to corporations, unless money is given directly to a community project applied for by an individual village. For example, Jim Handy (2008, p. 30; Mychalejko, 2005) explains that the World Bank committed funds to the Canadian owned Marlin mine. The loans and finances from the IMF and World Bank are controlled by the Guatemalan government conditionally, requiring the state to reduce “social service expenditures and [lifts] price controls on basic necessities, which leaves many Guatemalans vulnerable to poverty, chronic unemployment, health problems, crime and violence” (Aylward, 2010; Benson et al.,

2008, p. 49). Moreover, LOLITA claims that imposed 'development' is done in a deceiving way. She says that,

[w]e have analyzed that the World Bank, gave them [the government] an order, where they were told to use culture as one way of getting into the communities, to invade them. Living together with the communities. So this confuses us, but we know really what the long-term goal is.

LOLITA acknowledges the strategies that are institutionalized in organizations as a way to expand 'development' practices. In order to gain money from institutions like the World Bank, the Guatemala government must adhere to their programs (Benson et al., 2008). However, OSMUNDO declares that any money that has made it into the hands of the Maya, is minimal, and cannot make significant changes to alter the Indigenous population's situation in the long-term (Hewitt, 2000). He says,

[s]peaking about the NGO's from the United Nations, sometimes they channel money to the government and it all just goes in circles, it never gets to the communities, or just a little bit. And now the international organizations, they have invested a lot of money in Guatemala, but none of it has reached the communities.

Much of the money reaching the Maya goes towards short-term problems that do not enhance the overall condition of a community (Hale, 2002) or into the pockets of oligarchs, large landowners or large businesses (COPAE, 2008a).

DON JUÁN verbalizes his perception of resource extraction in Guatemala by multinational companies. Specifically, he emphasizes his admiration for Bolivian President Evo Morales, who nationalized his country's resources.

[W]hat I understand this means, nationalization, it means that it belongs to the people, and he [Evo Morales] did it for the people, and by the people. I think these kinds of policies should really be implemented, the governments in Latin America, in the Caribbean so that these resources can be taken advantage of by, those who live in these territories, but it can't go into the hands of foreign companies like Montana and Goldcorp. Because they only take it away, and they say they leave some of it there, but it's not like that.

Both DON JUÁN and RONXOX speak about the rights of the Indigenous population to have control over their land and the resources beneath the surface. If the Maya want to extract wealth from the earth, they want to do it themselves, with Mother Earth's permission (Falla, 2001; PBI, 2006). However, the companies present in the country do not respect the land the way the Indigenous people do. OSMUNDO relates to this point with his experience of invading multinational corporations. He says,

[W]hen they want to impose a mine or a hydroelectric dam, or other megaproject, all of the natural resources, so petroleum as well, all of these natural resources when they are exploited, they only leave one *Quetzal* in a country and 99 *Quetzales* goes out of the country. That's just robbery.⁴⁸

The companies that come to Guatemala come to take advantage of the rich natural resources and potential revenues through 'free' trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) (COPAE, 2008a; Haas, 2008; Mychalejko, 2005). Both NAFTA and CAFTA open new markets and protect investors by increasing "the power of large corporations while attacking the sovereignty of governments and their ability to act in public interests" (COPAE, 2008a, p. 27; Mychalejko, 2005). OSMUNDO teased me, pretending to steal my camera, and then asked me if it was fair of him to take it when we were done. Of course, the answer was "No," and this was the point he was trying to make. According to Rights Action (2011, para. 27), the Canadian mining company Goldcorp Inc. "concluded that the project would be profitable if gold were selling at \$270 per ounce, or more. Today, gold is selling at \$1400 ounce. Goldcorp is making almost 10 times as much money, per ounce of gold." Haas (2008, p. 24; COPAE, 2008a, p. 27) echoes OSMUNOD saying that mining companies operating in Guatemala pay a mere

⁴⁸ A *Quetzal* is the name of Guatemala's currency.

one percent to the government in revenue while 99 percent returns to the multinational corporation. I agree with OSMUNDO, this is theft.

Often, the companies that move into El Quiché send their products outside of the department or even internationally, keeping the Maya in the dark – literally. ANÍBAL explains,

[I]ast week, they started a new hydroelectric project, the Hydro ‘Xacbal’ and it produces 95 Megawatts. And not *one* watt is here for Quiché, not one. And it’s going down to the plants in Retalhuleu on the coast and then out to whoever can buy it. And we here? Nothing, nada! That is development? No, it’s not.

Multinational companies come to exploit minerals, petroleum, water and electricity, export their product away from Indigenous territory (Haas, 2008). Companies that build hydroelectric dams do not evaluate the cultural alienation their megaproject creates (Johnston & Garcia-Downing, 2004). The Maya have protested “against having their wallets emptied by transnational electric companies,” but as a result are treated like “peasants” or sometimes even “terrorists” (Bastos, 2010, p. 26). According to DON LORENZO,

[t]he electric projects that are in all the communities....The electric companies unfortunately charge them even if they are not using it. That’s just one example here in Quiché. A lady she just had one lamp and one light, one light bulb in her house. She had to pay 3000 *Quetzales* for electricity for one month, and nobody can fight this. Because they are in the same situation, the government has sold their own resources, have sold their resources of the people. So in these agreements, they support companies and not the consumers.... That’s considered development.

As said before, the companies keep an overwhelming majority of their revenue, and continue to exploit the populations from which they steal (COPAE, 2008a; Haas, 2008). Sadly, “[p]rivate companies will continue to charge these communities exorbitantly high prices for electricity, leaving them only the negative impacts of the dams” (COPAE,

2008a, p. 28). Thus, community members like those DON LORENZO described will unlikely receive power at a fair price in the near future.

Discussions of ‘development’ left many respondents emotionally frustrated by the end of our conversations. Particularly, ANÍBAL would express his irritations openly with me. He would raise his fists into the air, shake them and say,

That’s development? It makes me feel like this! [Shakes fists]

ANÍBAL’s eyes widened and his hands quaked, because the invasion of foreign forces does not just affect the Indigenous lands, it also attacks their souls. The presence of multinational companies is increasing, because Guatemala has integrated into bilateral and regional ‘free’ trade agreements that are continually opening up to new markets in the Global North (Mychalejko, 2005). RONXOX speaks strongly about ‘development’ imposed corporations and institutions the Global North. She says,

if I see it as development what the Western version says, it is inhuman development, because it’s based on stomping on the dignity of human beings. And why do I say that? Because development in terms of Western development, in the vision of people, those who have written in your books, it’s different than the reality that we live everyday.... [W]hat I was speaking about, is it’s inhuman.

The capitalist system, as Arturo Escobar (2004, p. 208) explains, is “more inhumane than ever.”



Figure 5.4. OSMUNDO, ANÍBAL and ISABEL.
 OSMUNDO (left), ANÍBAL (centre with red cap) and ISABEL (far right) participate in the October 22nd 2010 *consulta* held in Santa Cruz del Quiché.
 Source. Rodríguez, 2010.

Mining, megaprojects, hydroelectric dams, plantations, petroleum and genetically modified organisms (GMO's) have all been identified by the Indigenous leaders as invasive forms of 'development' from the Global North. Resistance has been an aspect of numerous interview participants which, as Arturo Escobar (1995, p. 216) notes, has been common among groups in the Global South since the 1980s, which wish to define their own identities. Today, the Indigenous groups are "not interested in development alternatives, but alternatives to development" (Escobar cited in Nederveen Pieterse, 2000, p. 362). Each interview participant made a request for an alternative to Northern visions of 'development.'

‘Development’ as a Loss of Culture and Identity

[A]ll culture has good ideas, but without losing what’s ours, because if we, for the Mayan culture, go to another country to another continent we are not going to impose ours. Every nation, every country, every people is different.
ISABEL

1. Loss of Traditional Connections with Mother Earth

As I walked the streets of Santa Cruz del Quiché, the Maya culture was everywhere around me. The vibrant colours of the women’s clothing, the smells of the corn tortillas and the sounds of their traditional language filled my senses. “All languages have worth” explains Adam Singerman (2010, p. 34), and I would argue so do cultures and identities. However, with the current wave of Western ‘development’ entering Guatemala, the Maya are struggling to hold onto their connection with Mother Earth, which is the foundational essence of being Maya (Falla, 2001; PBI, 2006; Viaene, 2010). To Leah Huff (2006, p. 81-82), the Maya express their lived experiences through the spiritual, cultural, communal and emotional connection to geographical landscapes as a form of identity. The Maya believe “that each person – as well as many animals, plants and material objects – possesses a spirit... that accompanies him or her even after death... [i]f the loss [of the spirit] is permanent, the person dies” (Viaene, 2010, p. 21). If their lands are being exploited and taken away, the Maya become displaced spiritually as well as physically (Viaene, 2010).

The Maya are an agricultural people, according to all participants. ISABEL says,

[t]his is foundational in the life of being Maya. And that food is prepared in clay pots, and to keep planting and to keep having animals, this is part of life and family.

They grow traditional crops that make up their staple diet and cultural traditions (Cook, 2000). As Shelton Davis (1992, p. 3-6; Wilson, 1995) explains, the Maya “are essentially

subsistence farmers who live on Indian maize, beans, and squash.” Driving across Guatemala, I could see corn and other foods thriving on the sides of the road, between buildings, in yards and gardens. Those who grow their own produce feed their families and try to sell extra crops in the markets to make a living beyond subsistence (Falla, 2001, p. 25). OSMUNDO lives in a community that prides itself in its agricultural capabilities. However, the crops that are brought to market are not always sold he says, because large landowners can sell mass produced yields at a lower price.

The potatoes that we grow, nobody buys it from us. Potatoes, the corn, the apples, all of the products that we grow, onions, tomatoes, all of that stuff. So who buys it from us? Nobody at all. Each *campesino* grows his harvest, and the communities come down here to the town to sell their product. And whoever grows the potatoes buys the tomatoes from the tomato seller. And the one who sells tomatoes buys his potatoes, so the product is just exchanged within the community.... [T]here is no government policy that helps the people in the countryside, the *campesinos*. We know how to grow stuff, we know how to make stuff, we know all of this. But the problem is the big companies don't allow us to. We have an obstacle which is them. And that is why there has been big problems in Guatemala, even more.

OSMUNDO's community is not able to export crops into the global market, and the government only promises “subsidies for fertilizer” during elections as assistance for farmers who provide for their communities (Benson et al., 2008, p. 47). Large landowners have monopolized land since the 1870s, and created an “export crop economy based on the cultivation of coffee on large plantations” (Warren, 1998, p. 11; Wilson, 1995) taking away traditional lands used for subsistence. The Indigenous people are slowly being pushed off their agricultural lands, for ‘development’ projects, such as the Marlin mine (PBI, 2006) and with them goes their customary ways of living and provisions for their families. If the Maya lose their agricultural connection with the land, they will lose a traditional part of who they are as a people.

RONXOX portrays the use of ‘development’ from the North in an interesting way. She says that while the Maya live a humane existence, the ‘development’ projects imposed by the government and foreign companies are inhumane. The Maya culture and identity is connected with a balanced relationship with the earth, whereas the opposing vision only considers the capital advantage. For instance, RONXOX says,

the impacts of these kinds of projects is the loss of identity, division within the community.... we lose track of the path that development should have taken.... If we don’t do it, Mother Earth will continue to be destroyed.

As members of the Indigenous population lose their land, they can lose their vision of life in an attempt to survive. This is how ISABEL’s community became divided between neighbours and villages, when members of her village murdered her father. Loss of identity can cause individuals to act in irrational ways, and creates social divisions that further degrade Maya traditions (Anckermann et al., 2005). Moreover, as spiritual leader DON JUÁN described the loss of traditional connections with Mother Earth as a crime for which Indigenous people will be punished for. He says,

[o]ur Mother Earth is going to charge us for this. The consequences with our Mother Earth is open bleeding that is happening all over the place.

The inhumane actions of outsiders may seem like serving the greater good, but it is irreversibly damaging an Indigenous way of life.

2. A Loss of Identity and Culture for Traditional Maya Women

The Maya believe that men and women play complementary roles within society (Falla, 2001). Together, both sexes play an integral role in harmonizing a community to

achieve a unified vision of life, “older men and women are the source of spirituality and deserve the respect of all... [e]ven though women have not inherited land, Maya spirituality does not discriminate against them, because men consult them about everything” (Falla, 2001, p. 245-246). I witnessed this balance between male and female interview participants. However, the model of ‘development’ being enforced from internal and external forces has caused some changes to the traditional dynamics of men and women in the local communities (Goldín & Rosenbaum, 2009).

Marcus Power (2003, p. 199) believes that women have been central to formations of effective resistance around the world. I found LOLITA to be a prime example of the spirit Maya women carry. She is married, has children, and continues her role as an Indigenous leader because that is where her strengths lie. Not all women are as fortunate as the female participants I have encountered though. With the imposition of ‘development’ within the communities, the balance between men and women has skewed. LOLITA says,

[T]he system, the capitalist system, it’s about accumulation from the work relations, these companies and institutions don’t acknowledge the work of women, because if they recognize it, then they would have to acknowledge two salaries. So women were erased, women’s work was invisible, it was ignored in order not to pay, and now they blame ‘Machismo,’ but it really is the planned organized system from those people. For example, in families, this system was imposed on them and they are really messed up relationships of power. Even clothes and things are controlled by the men, all the money. And he will buy her the clothes and what colour and everything. So we have this kind of control from the men. And this doesn’t allow us to have our own existence. It’s a really strong thing, very violent against women.

The Maya women have been disproportionately pushed to the margins because roles that were traditionally valued as equal have been devalued by external influences (Power 2003). “Machismo has deep historical roots in Guatemala” according to Liliana Goldín and Brenda Rosenbaum (2009, p. 71) and stems from development as a means of power

(Power, 2003; Thomas, 2000b). This struggle altered the Indigenous dynamics that had successfully valued both men and women's work for centuries. Just as the Global North created the 'other' with countries in the Global South (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997a), so too did 'development' create a widening gap between the sexes (Power, 2003). As LOLITA said, division between the sexes has made women dependent on men for existence, thus removing their cultural identity as equals within Maya society.

There is a movement led by women who are going back to more traditional roles as healers within society. DOÑA MAGDALENA told me how she is learning about natural medicine that her ancestors once used. She sat proudly and explained how much better her life is with cultural remedies, and how many Indigenous families are revisiting the rich knowledge forged by their grandparents.

[W]e have to change ourselves, we should not be angry anymore, we shouldn't be sad anymore, we needn't get worried about everything, because worrying about everything, we don't solve anything, so we only get sicker. So beginning at the beginning is what we do. And I am learning so much! This is Mayan healing, this is the true Mayan healing. We've forgotten about it, we have thrown it to the ground, but now we are beginning to recover.... I don't know if I am right or not in saying this, but I have suffered a whole lot as a woman.

Women like DOÑA MAGDALENA are building a resurgence of men and women who hold onto their identities and cultural practices with medicine (Zur, 1998). Many women with whom she works are widows from the conflict, who years later are still dealing with trauma inflicted on them. "Many widows say they have little time for weaving now that they have to take on men's work... [o]thers have been forced to give up weaving altogether which entails a loss of identity, a loss of continuity with the past" (Zur, 1998, p. 136). Indigenous members of the community are preserving their health in a more traditional manner similar to DOÑA MAGDALENA. She admits she has experienced

struggles as a woman, taking on household responsibilities for which her husband would have been responsible. Her personal story reflects the recovery of her identity as a Maya woman through her transition from a public health worker to a more natural healer (see also Zur, 1998).

3. Loss of Language and Traditional Practices

The traditional language of the Maya is distinct for each region in which they live (Little & Smith, 2009, p. 89; Warren, 1998). Geographically, the Indigenous people of El Quiché speak Spanish and Quiché (Appendix A). Spanish was introduced centuries ago (Lovell, 1988; Singerman, 2010) and has remained the elite language of the Ladino population (Singerman, 2010). There is a “mentality that Spanish is somehow ‘superior’ to Mayan languages” says Adam Singerman (2010, p. 34). Bilingual education is a part of the Accord on Identity and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Imai et al., 2007; Maxwell, 2009, p. 84; Plant, 1998; Warren, 1998), but internal and external forces have caused a loss of traditional language within communities. According to the REMHI (1999, p. 48) during the conflict “[p]eople were displaced to different areas had to learn another language, usually Spanish... which provided an obstacle to teaching children their native language.” Guatemalan languages are assured short-term survival, but as elders pass away, community members leave, there is no guarantee of individual linguistic survival (Singerman, 2010).

While waiting in Cunén for OSMUNDO to arrive for our interview, I sat in the sun with the Reverend Emilie. Cunén does not receive many foreigners visiting the

valley, so we became quite the spectacle, especially for young children. At one point, Emilie stopped speaking English to me, turned with a smile, and started speaking Quiché to curious young boys. Startled, they looked back and forth to one another, amazed that a white woman would know their native language. The Reverend Emilie is one of the few Westerners who have embraced this language and value cultural significance (Singerman, 2010).

DON JUÁN did not have fond childhood memories of school. He hated school when he was young, and resented his family for making him go, not because he did not like learning, but because of what he was being taught. DON JUÁN was one of many Quiché Maya who were forced to leave their language and culture at the gates of the schoolyard.

Years ago, they focused really on the Hispanicization in schools. We were prohibited to speak our Quiche language. Prohibited Quiche language in the classroom, this experience I'm not telling you because I read it in a book. I live this experience, I lived it! I was one of the people whom when my parents gave me a chance to go to school, I felt, I felt like they had left me in an insane asylum, in a jail. Because the teacher had her way of being, how to correct her students. I was one of these 'we have to Hispanicize these people'. And that was a part of the development policy to destroy the language, as if language was the limiting obstacle for development, when it was really the other way around. When a child speaks his own language in school, they feel better, they can speak better, they can display their capabilities better, they understand better, they feel completely confident.

In an attempt to assimilate the Maya people, the Guatemalan government did not allow any traditional languages to be taught in schools, a kind of "ethnocide" described by Judith Maxwell (2009, p. 93). Children, like DON JUAN, were forced to speak Spanish, and adopt an identity different from their own because only Spanish speaking teachers were hired to educate schoolchildren (Maxwell, 2009). Moreover, Kay Warren (1998, p. 200) explains that in the 1980s, the national school system marginalized "impoverished agriculturalists, some of whom [were] monolingual in [I]ndigenous languages and many

of whom [were] illiterate in Spanish.” DON LORENZO recognizes that when children go to school and are trained not to speak the tongue their grandparents preserved for them, a part of the Maya’s history is lost. Hey says,

I would say, maybe, this is another model of systemizing from the Mayan experience.... [W]e’ve lost the oral traditions which we kept for years. So there is an advantage now, and there is a disadvantage as well. And maybe in its stage of development, it can strengthen its culture, and it can also forget our culture.

Learning another language is not a detriment to any culture, but forgetting a traditional language threatens the existence of the Indigenous identity (Singerman, 2010). DON LORENZO agrees, learning Spanish is an advantage for the Maya people, but not if they forsake their own language in the process.

Education is of the highest importance for the Maya, according to all of the interview participants. OSMUNDO is going to law school, and ISABEL is trying to complete her bachelor’s degree. To say that the Maya are ‘backwards’ because they lack education is not truthful, she says. Instead, the Maya value learning that encompasses their way of living, rather than strictly an outside system of knowledge (Maxwell, 2009; Warren, 1998). ISABEL says,

[t]he language....we’re almost like Ladinos or Mestizos because of the language. They say it, or we say it ourselves that to speak our own language is to be backward. But it’s not backwardness, it’s part of our identity.

ISABEL says that by ignoring the Maya culture in school, the teachers are educating children that the Indigenous way of life is ‘underdeveloped.’ This view of ‘development’ deepens the already strong discrimination against the Maya (Viaene, 2010). When the Peace Accords were signed, DON LORENZO recalls the promises made to ensure the Maya culture was not erased from the classrooms.

[D]ifferent institutions and processes were set up according to the agreement on identity which was apart of the overall agreement to make more formal education demands, bilingual and intercultural education. And they were strong, there were strong efforts from old teachers who didn't want to take this challenge because of the shame that they spoke the Mayan language. Discrimination and lack of respect that they received in their own training. So there are teachers that even now... won't recognize their language.

The prejudice from the Meztizo and ruling elite against the Maya's culture and language transcends Indigenous visions of life (Blaser et al., 2004). An exemplary case of incorporating the Maya culture and education comes from the heart of a community in Rabinal. Jesús Tecú Osorio, and other survivors of the Río Negro massacre, founded the Fundación Nueva Esperanza, or New Hope Foundation, to offer Maya and Ladino students valuable education based on culturally relevant content and methodologies (Einbinder, 2010; Fundación Nueva Esperanza, 1997). This foundation is a successful example of how education, multiculturalism and community perspectives can be brought together to strengthen cultural identity for the betterment of each participant.

External and internal forces have attempted to secure "their dominion over Indigenous peoples" and refuse to recognize Indigenous people's rights to life and self-determined development (Blaser et al., 2004, p. 3). Western education was imposed on the Indigenous population (Maxwell, 2009; Warren, 1998), because the Guatemalan government saw their traditional ways as holding the country behind (Escobar, 1995). 'Development,' from the Global North, is described by Escobar (1992a, p. 20; Rapley, 2002) as a combination of capital, technological and educational policy applied in order to 'develop' the Global South. Escobar (1992a, 1995, 2004) and I understand this perspective to be incorrect. The richness of the Maya culture is unique, and must be celebrated and upheld by the Accords created at the end of the conflict (Imai et al., 2007). In 2003, Guatemala's Ministry of Education launched a program to incorporate

multiculturalism and celebrations of heritage, but the textbooks were originally drafted in Spanish. They have since been translated in different Maya languages (Maxwell, 2009). Schools need to celebrate children's bilingualism and their traditional culture to foster greater acceptance and preservation of Indigenous ways of life for future generations.

The Maya continue to fight peacefully for survival in dignified ways (PBI, 2010). However, the national government continues to create obstacles for the Indigenous population's self-determined development (Mychaleko, 2005). Former Guatemalan President Oscar Berger famously said "[w]e have to protect the investors" (Mychalejko, 2005, p. 1; Nolin & Stephens, 2010, p. 2) at the expense of marginalizing, excluding and exploiting the Maya (Loomis, 2000). For instance, LOLITA describes how the government pretends to support the traditional customs, but until the Indigenous Maya are supported by the administration, tolerance does not equal acceptance.

[The government, t]hey haven't supported us. I could confuse things by saying that the government now allows, for example, language because in the past it was prohibited. To use our traditional clothing, in the schools they would take our clothing away, but now it's allowed. Our ceremonies were sins before, they were persecuted, the elders who made the ceremonies. Now, that is not true. So there's things like that, and what they call at the cultural level, but I say 'No!.' because they only use these ways in order to continue their own model, the neoliberal model of imposition using this way of being.

She acknowledges that changes have been made. The Maya can now practice their traditional ceremonies, wear their cultural attire, and openly speak their language (Imai et al., 2007; Maxwell, 2009). However, from all participants, I got the impression that the Indigenous people express their Maya identity while looking over their shoulders. They are a proud society that is not accepted by the Guatemalan ruling class or by companies bringing 'development.' Until the Maya culture is celebrated for its contribution to

humanity by the government and foreign companies, Indigenous citizens will continue to struggle for harmony as a people.

Chapter 6: Perspectives of Development and Concluding Thoughts

The Indigenous leaders tell me of a vision of life they want for future generations. They inform me of their perspectives of development and how they are different from their perceptions of Northern ideas of ‘progress.’ LOLITA expresses her frustration to me during her interview. She is a passionate leader, strong and stoic, but when asked what life would be like without invasive forms of ‘development,’ she wept.

Can we do that later? [Begins to cry] I don’t know what, trying to envision what it would be like without the mine here.

To LOLITA and other respondents, the idea of their struggle coming to a halt, is as endless as the Global North’s vision of endless mines themselves (Einbinder, 2008). It is a dream that the Maya want put to reality, but at present, their efforts are to continue preserving their livelihoods and their Mother Earth (Falla, 2001; PBI, 2010). I found that the Indigenous Maya leaders have a clear vision of what they want for their people, but it is hard to articulate the exact process of a life free from external and internal forces.

ANÍBAL explains that the Maya have been fighting to regain their livelihoods from ‘development’ forces spanning hundreds of years. He says,

we have to look, on these pathways, political and social to find our own way of developing. We have to do this, and we have a long way to go. So even though we are strong in some ways, we don’t have a certain kind of strength, to think about what development might be in our own country. So we don’t have that yet. So we are continuing to struggle. So what do we have to do then? We simply have to see what development is from our own conditions, our own social, political economic conditions, and our own resources. That’s what the truth is more or less.

ANÍBAL's statement is strong. The Maya want their own self-determined model of life, but are not allowed the capacity to exist. Their vision of life remains informed by the *Popol Vuh* and maintains the philosophy of a deep connection between the Maya and Mother Earth (Tedlock, 1996). These foundations for a life free from internal and external forces are present in the Maya's struggle for existence, but as ANÍBAL says, the Maya cannot clearly see their own self-determined vision because it is blocked by current 'development' practices. To the Maya, it is hard to see the future, when every day is a struggle to maintain present situations.

Although my analysis is based on interviews with eight Indigenous leaders in the department of El Quiché, I have met with Indigenous Maya communities across Guatemala. During the UNBC delegations, I spoke with Indigenous community members who reiterated ANÍBAL's statement. I have witnessed a general consensus among Indigenous communities: that 'development' from internal and external forces has not allowed the Maya their own self-determined vision of life. I do not attempt to homogenize the Maya of Guatemala as I acknowledge there are differences within and between communities that struggle with 'development.' However, I agree with Nolin Hanlon and Shankar (2000, p. 268) that using *testimonio*, as the Maya have done for centuries, "reveal[s] their struggles against" internal and external forces that connect Indigenous communities across Guatemala.

In this section, I highlight the struggles for a self-determined vision of life identified by the Indigenous leaders of El Quiché. I present this research separate from the analyses made in Chapter Five, because it represents hope for the Maya's future. Moreover, this examination offers an alternative to applications of 'development'

supplied by the Global North, while providing space for the Indigenous people to explain how development should be informed by those being ‘developed’

The Right to a Self-Determined Model of Life

There isn't space for us to offer our own proposal or to allow a space for negotiation
LOLITA

1 Freedom from Racism, Discrimination, Violence, Loss of Dignity, Oppression, Exclusion and Inequality

The Maya have endured centuries of discrimination and racism simply for being Indigenous. Guatemala has a history of excluding its Indigenous population that is still present in the 21st Century (Handy, 2008, Johnston & Garcia-Downing, 2004, Mychalejko, 2005). The Maya face inequality from the ruling elite and by multinational corporations (Bastos, 2010, Benson et al, 2008, Handy, 2008). All eight participants acknowledged this discrimination, and strive for existence free from prejudice. RONXOX tells me of the great contributions the Maya have made for humankind and how the Indigenous population should be valued for their wealth of knowledge (Loomis, 2000). RONXOX says,

Development from the Mayan point of view they were astrologers, mathematicians, healers, people in charge of guiding the spiritual collective, economists and politicians, all of this experience, what they did, we have to take back what was good, take out what was positive, because we don't want to go back and commit the same mistakes

RONXOX expresses the need for equality among all human beings. Like all the Maya leaders I encountered, she focused on the positive aspects the Indigenous people have to

offer, because they have many cultural riches that are undervalued (see also COPAE, 2008a; Loomis, 2000). DON LORENZO echoes RONXOX. He explains,

[f]or us development is\ intellectual, labour related, about art and music and language and our cosmovision. From there, our learning, our knowledge is deposited in these areas and our astronomy our medicine, architecture and handicrafts.

DOÑA MAGDALENA also shares this perspective. She says the Maya are told they are poor by internal and external forces (see also Blaser et al., 2004), but this is not the case.

[W]e're not poor, we are rich! We have riches we have left thrown to the ground, but now we are beginning to recover.

When she says, “thrown to the ground,” she whips her arm over her head in an attempt to give life to this action. DOÑA MAGDALENA hid her identity during the internal conflict, as a tactic for survival, as did many other Indigenous Maya. Today, fifteen years since the end of the war, DOÑA MAGDALENA describes how she and her community are beginning to express their culture openly again with pride. Of course, the Maya are wealthy with culture, knowledge and items that are less valued at the international level (Blaser et al., 2004; Loomis, 2000). Richness in culture and identity is not valued by the dominant advanced capitalist economies (Thomas, 2000a). However, DOÑA MAGDALENA's explanation of cultural richness and value places Indigenous people at the forefront of an era for re-thinking ‘development’ (Tucker, 1999).

For over five centuries the Maya have endured violence and oppression (Cook, 2000, p. 13; Lovell, 1988, 2000). Indigenous communities have continued to resist disrespectful forms of ‘development’ by adapting to each situation (Cook, 2000). LOLITA feels its presence on an ongoing basis, as her people are dominated by outside forces that keep them from living their lives freely:

daily, so these ideas are forced on us, but with different focuses, and different messages and different ways. So in that time [the Spanish invasion] it was one way, and now it's a different way, but it's always this imposition and always it's something that is violent. And what is imposed, and what is complementary for us, is oppositional to them.... But they say models of development already has a really strong and violent impact on our culture, so it has a negative impact maybe for some, and turns the life over, destroys the life of others.

The Maya have never compromised their integrity. They continue to hold onto their identity in a peaceful way when faced with neoliberal policies of the Global North (COPAE, 2008a; Warren, 1992). The “[Maya] culture appears to have survived all attempts by [L]adino and foreign academicians” to erase the Maya’s culture (Perera, 1993, p. 316-317). However, the Maya continue to live in a divided world controlled by forces informed by the dominant perspectives of the Global North, between the ‘developed’ and modern, and the ‘underdeveloped’ and traditional (Blaser, 2004; Escobar, 1992a). Thankfully, perspectives defined as Post-development, Anti-globalization and Anti-development are bringing change to the purely economic policies that persist (Escobar, 2004; Nederveen Pieterse, 2000; Thomas, 2000b)

The Maya strive for an egalitarian existence (Falla, 2000) that has been denied to them by those in positions of power (Thomas, 2000b). Moreover, the Guatemalan government and the Global North are responsible for a loss of dignity the Maya feel, by treating Indigenous people as insignificant (Handy, 2008). DOÑA MAGDALENA told me how she abandoned her Indigenous identity while she was in hiding during the genocide. Nearly two decades later, she is reviving her pride as a Maya woman with the help of other Indigenous community members.

I wish everybody understood, but a lot of people don’t understand. I feel when I began, I was afraid, and I didn’t like it, maybe a year later, little by little, I learned, and I understand those who don’t understand yet.... We believe the time of our grandparents is going to return. But it’s hard still. In Guatemala, my daughters tell me there are 300

people who are working on this process in different places. Is that we are waking up.
Little by little.

DOÑA MAGDALENA is like many Maya who are re-claiming their identity after years of oppression and discrimination against them. In the Quiché, this slow recovery is due to the damage inflicted during the genocide. El Quiché suffered the most extreme repression during the conflict (Benson et al., 2008; PBI, 2010; REMHI, 1999) “[T]he army had succeeded in its desire to shatter any feelings of the [Maya] solidarity almost beyond redemption” (Zur, 1998, p. 103). The REMHI (1999, p. 319-320) now calls for a respect for individual and cultural rights as a way to ensure the renewal of Indigenous society. Today, the Maya want freedom to live with a development that promotes dignity, equality and peace (Blaser, 2004; Blaser et al., 2004; Loomis, 2000).

2. A Right to Live the Maya Way

The Indigenous people of El Quiché have the right to live in a way that best suits their vision of existence (Blaser, 2004; Loomis, 2000). OSMUNDO says,

[b]eing Mayan doesn’t mean that we don’t know anything, we have a lot of knowledge.... The problem is the state structures don’t allow us to develop along the ways of our knowledge.

The Maya must be granted the autonomy to “reject mainstream assumptions about capitalist development and to develop and explore the realm” of self-determined development (Power, 2003, p. 28). Freedom is the foundation of what the Indigenous population struggles to reach on a daily basis according to interview participants – to achieve a self-determined way of life. The Maya do not want to be cut off from the world

(Loomis, 2000); but rather, they strive to exist within it on their own terms (Falla, 2000; Tedlock, 1996; Viaene, 2010).

To have power over their own existence is the vision for each the eight leaders who spoke to me. DON LORENZO described it best when he said the Indigenous people ought to be ‘the protagonists’ of their own development. He says the Maya must,

look for themselves, to find themselves again, to become unified again, and to look for a common goal and perhaps in that way they can be heard, and we can stop focusing on confrontation.

Only the Maya can achieve their dream of self-determined existence, but they cannot reach their goals without support. Instead RONXOX explains how:

this is a challenge for us. We have to see, how to make balance so can achieve, we cannot isolate ourselves and go 100 percent into the other side of what they are offering us. If we knew how to listen to one another, the vision of development that I began speaking about, I think that we could [achieve] a lot despite there is this globalization, but we can learn to live with it, but the whole region could become a more humane place.

The Maya are not against taking advantage of the global market economy as it stands, they just desire a place for themselves within it, rather than being eliminated from it. Just as LOLITA said, the model of life is a way of ‘co-existing’ with all the elements in the world. However, while the Maya believe in harmony between every aspect in life, they insist on their autonomous right to govern their own reality.

3. The Model of Life

I understand that living a Maya way of life is different than any imposed vision from the Global North. Fernando Suazo, respected historian and contributor to the REHMI (1999) report and a former Catholic priest from Spain, conveyed this divergence

to the UNBC Guatemala Field School during my initial delegation in May of 2010. Based on his experience of marrying into the Maya community of Rabinal, he explained that the distorted visions of the Global North are wrong and obsessed with competition and having 'more'. This type of 'development,' I would agree with Suazo, is not appropriate for the Maya of Guatemala. Suazo gave an example of a Maya agriculturalist whose animals were ailing. The man said to him, "Father, come and pray, my animals are dying. If I bring you, your blessing will spread to all of the other animals" (Suazo, personal communication, May 21, 2010). Suazo repeatedly expresses the laws of reciprocity the Maya have with the flora and fauna. He told the delegation that the Indigenous people believes the benefit of one is an advantage for all, thus the Maya do not exclude one another as the Global North has done to them. Suazo says, "[we] have to look at the ways [and] potentials to change" the relationship between the Global North and Global South (Suazo, personal communication, May, 21 2010).

Envisioning a future for the Indigenous population starts at the fundamental base of what it means to be Maya (Falla, 2000). DON JUÁN tells me that,

[w]e can't speak about development if it doesn't include the richness that we still have in the Indigenous peoples. It should be an inclusive 'development' and not a destructive, it should not destroy collective life and ancient practices. The wisdom whose essence is values and principles. We have our way of life. [A]nd Indigenous peoples are not objects of this structure, but subjects of this structure.

As Esteva (1992, p. 23) says, imagining self-determined development offers direction, encouragement, orientation and hope for the future. DON JUÁN concludes that a way of life, lived by the Maya, will not be based on the appropriation of labour, or the theft of other people's resources. It will instead be created by the visions of the Maya who live equally together (Falla, 2000). "Crutches are not necessary when it is possible to walk

with one's own feet, on one's own path, in order to dream one's own dreams. Not the borrowed ones of development" (Esteva, 1992, p. 23). Just as ANÍBAL says, the Maya people,

...want their own development projects, we do!

The Indigenous communities are keen to design their own proposals and have their own way of living that is not implemented by external forces (Loomis, 2000). This is a process of change, which continues to be advocated by those who do not have a dominant voice in development policy (Schrijer, 1993). The model of life that is lived by the Maya will finally be put to practice in ANÍBAL's eyes, but only if the international community and the national government begin to work with those who advocate Anti-development and Post-development spaces rather than against them (Nederveen Pieterse, 2000). He says,

I think the best project that we have now, that we haven't built yet, is the community building around the defence of territory.

ANÍBAL, like other Indigenous leaders, is committed to changing the dominant 'development' practices through resistance. He explains that in order to transform the relationship between the Maya and internal/external forces, the Maya must continue to struggle for community lands; protecting the Maya's identity and sense of place with the defence of Indigenous territory. As Terrence Loomis (2000, p. 896) explains, "[I]ndigenous peoples' concepts, principles, models and efforts to explore alternative development paths have largely been overlooked." For this reason, I continue to re-think 'development' in a way that highlights and prioritizes the Maya's views.

As outlined by participants, the Maya strive for the betterment of their people, as well as their country. The Maya take pride in their Mother Earth and want the right to

protect her and all of her inhabitants (Falla, 2000; PBI, 2010; Viaene, 2010). ISABEL hopes that in the future, Indigenous people will play a pivotal role in government, to help share a vision of life that promotes equality among all Guatemalan people.

[W]hat we would hope, and as a Mayan people, is that one day, the Maya people can govern as well. And that's our great vision. Not just the big powerful ones always, but the Mayan people, have their own wisdom. And that's important as well.

The Guatemalan government continues to be controlled by those who coordinated the genocide (Bellino, 2010). However, as the Maya become more educated in the international language of cultural and human rights (Warren, 1998) they increasingly exercise their civil liberties through *consultas*, demonstrations and peaceful protests (Haas, 2008; NISGUA, 2010; PBI, 2010). ISABEL hopes that the Maya will have an opportunity to bring their knowledge to the table, to alleviate the suffering of poor and marginalized Maya (Benson & Fischer, 2009). She says,

what we hope, and as a Mayan people is that one day, the Maya people can govern as well. And that's our great vision. Not just the big powerful ones always, but Mayan people have their own wisdom. And that's important as well.

I agree with ISABEL - this can be done! "Indigenous peoples' struggles are now carried on within complex transnational networks and alliances that traverse the boundaries between the state, markets and civil society, including the environmentalists and human rights movements" (Blaser et al., 2004, p. 1).

I am left with the reality of the daily injustices the Maya face. They strive for a reality, a vision of life that OSMUNDO says,

...means to be okay, without discrimination, without inequality.

To live in a world where the Indigenous people have self-determined futures is a dream that all eight of my participants are fighting to achieve. The Maya have their own development, a vision of life that encompasses every member of society, and does not cast individuals or groups to the margins (Falla, 2000). There is a need for respect and humility among internal and external forces that have forced ‘development’ on the Indigenous populations of the world (Tucker, 1999). Today, the Maya’s struggle continues, but as ANÍBAL says,

[T]hese are dreams that are able to come true if we fight. That is what we want, and a lot more.

Conclusions for the Future

The concept of development is under immense scrutiny. By questioning “what is development and development for whom?” a re-thinking of these practices is underway throughout the world (Abell, 1999; Escobar, 2004; Parpart & Veltmeyer, 2004). Critical development practitioners are seriously evaluating ‘development’ to better understand the divided views between the Global North and Global South from a richly interdisciplinary perspective (Allen, 2003; Desai & Potter, 2002; Power, 2003). In my thesis, I present findings of a recent research project in which I sought the perspectives of eight Indigenous Maya leaders of El Quiché, Guatemala. Based on interviews conducted in September 2010 in the Guatemalan highland city of Santa Cruz del Quiché and surrounding area, I attempt to better understand the meaning(s) of the word development from an Indigenous perspective, and how a self-determined vision of life best suits local communities. Based on their lived experiences, the Indigenous Maya interviewees asserted that ‘development’ practices prescribed by the local government and country’s

elites, as well as outside NGO's and multinational corporations, are not in the best interests of the Indigenous population.

I attempt to highlight how the imposition of the 'development' itself has become, to these leaders, synonymous with forms of racism, inequality, exclusion, oppression and a loss of Indigenous identity and culture. Rather, Maya leaders in El Quiché stress the right to self-determined development, cultural preservation and a more holistic vision of life for individuals and communities.

My original thesis questions allowed me to inquire and interact with Indigenous people who experience 'development' from the Global North first hand. I aim to challenge mainstream 'development,' as well as confront prevailing applications of 'development' from the Global North. Drawing from the relevant literature allowed me to contextualize the lived experiences of the interview participants. It also enhances my exploration of re-thinking contemporary Development theory by scholars who have questioned the Global North's rationale for decades. My research challenges the ideologies of institutions, governments, NGO's and multinational corporations that have re-enforced the dominant visions to suit their own needs. This thesis may be seen by some as standing in the way of 'development.' Some may call me a radical thinker, while others might ignore my attempts altogether. Despite this, I have made attempts to confronted the barriers that further the struggles of the Maya in El Quiché, Guatemala and intend to continue in solidarity with the Indigenous people's fight in breaking down the walls of 'development' applied by the Global North.

My thesis in no way claims to capture the full picture of Guatemala's contemporary landscapes of 'development.' This country is far too complex and multi-

dimensional to be summarized in a Master's thesis. However, this research makes a contribution to the literature in an interdisciplinary way. For development studies, I have provided primary research from which scholars and practitioners can draw. This knowledge is practical for those studying with the Indigenous Maya of Guatemala, as well as those who are applying perspectives of development to other areas of the world. I do not imply that the struggles of the Maya are equal or superior to any other group. However, I do propose that the Maya have a right to a self-determined way of living, that needs further exploration, and the Maya provide one perspective worthy of acknowledgement. Moreover, I hope that my research provides encouragement to other International Studies students at UNBC to pursue initiatives that they are passionate about through fieldwork.

Indigenous people are characterized by neoliberal economic development as those who must endure change in order to be 'developed' or consequently be seen as in the way of 'development' (Blaser et al., 2004). I believe the Northern vision of 'development' needs to be altered. It is not acceptable to banish Indigenous groups, or those deemed 'underdeveloped' to the periphery (Escobar, 1992a; Tucker, 1999). The Indigenous Maya strive to be the architects of their own future and free from the alienating structures of the dominant forms of Northern development. Their vision is an alternative to the mainstream theories as described by Post-development theorists (Esteva, 1992; Sachs, 1992; Sidaway, 2002; Thomas, 2000b). For the Maya, Northern 'development' has failed to provide change that is mutually beneficial to all participants.

This thesis critiques the standards of 'development' prescribed by the Global North, by questioning who controls and implements 'development.' The Maya continue

to be marginalized by neoliberal economic visions of the Global North that, I argue, is detrimental to the Maya's culture and identity. I promote a Post-development theory that demands greater visibility, participation and social justice for those being 'developed,' or seen as in the way of 'development,' while unmasking the consequences of mainstream theories (Munck, 1999). Indigenous resistance movements require more participation to move beyond 'development' and greater focus on community visions for the future by understanding the Maya's perspective of self-determined development. This must be done by hearing testimonies and experience life as it is for those pushed to the margins by the Global North (Kothari, 1989; Nederveen Pieterse, 2000). By creating self-determined visions of life "*with* people rather than *for* them" scholars, practitioners and global citizens will hear the amplified voices of groups previously ignored by mainstream development (Power, 2003, p. 67).

Contributions

As Nolin Hanlon and Shankar (2000, p. 271) say, "[a]cademic engagement with people 'on the margins' comes, one hopes, from an ethical and moral commitment to work for social change, to change public consciousness about an issue, or influence public policy." In this thesis I attempt to contribute to Indigenous development and Indigenous studies literature. I hope my focus on the Maya of Guatemala provides perspectives of struggles and deepens the need to place Indigenous people at the forefront of development policies and practices. Moreover, I attempt to emphasize the importance of perspectives by those cast to the margins of 'development' and who are vastly overlooked by macro-economic policies implemented by the Global North (Loomis,

2000; Tucker, 1999). I attempt to make contributions to the critical development field and hope to encourage further study in the future. With further research, I hope to inform policy makers, and eventually promote a re-thinking of current practices inhibiting Indigenous communities from achieving their visions of life.

My contributions to the methodologies of primary research I hope will enhance practices applied through fieldwork. The methods I utilize are multidisciplinary and can easily be used by multiple arenas of the academic world. I would like to encourage other International Studies students, as well as other social science candidates, to explore the depths of development first hand. My experiences in Guatemala are documented in this thesis, and could be used to inform other students and researchers about the nature of fieldwork in a dangerous environment, such as Guatemala. Feminist methodologies also enhance my understanding of power, which is crucial to development and Indigenous studies. In particular, my use of feminist approaches may promote others to apply this method to research that encourages an equal relationship between participants and interviewers (Madge et al., 1997). Finally, by acknowledging my limitations as a researcher, I attempt to open the doors for other young academics. I recognize that my knowledge of Spanish and the Quiché Maya language is limited, but I was not discouraged from conducting my research. I encourage others to approach limitations such as this one head on. I implore more practitioners to share their research experiences, so that younger practitioners and scholars are better informed when conducting their own primary research. I hope my rigor as a researcher can one day contribute to bodies of literature, as well as provided encouragement for others to follow.

It is my intention to add knowledge to the current literature of development, Indigenous studies and methodological practices. Above all, I hope my most important contribution is to the Maya of El Quiché. In their hands, I hope this thesis is used by the Indigenous leaders as a documentation of communities' visions of life, perceptions of 'development' from the Global North, and archived as a piece of community history. Most importantly, I hope that one day, my thesis can inform policy makers and challenge Northern institutions and governments regarding each community's future as well as the rights to consultation. This thesis documents the lived experiences of the Indigenous Maya that cannot be erased.

In the near future, I intend to return to Guatemala to present my research findings and to supply each community with written copies for their own record. I anticipate having a condensed version translated into Spanish to make it more accessible to communities and participants. As well, I hope to make translated presentations to community leaders, with the help of the Reverend Emilie Smith, to explain what I have done with information given to me. It is important to me as a researcher that I give back to the communities from which I took information. I hope that my commitments and solidarity towards the communities will allow me to conduct more research in El Quiché in the future.

Concluding Thoughts

In my closing remarks, I call upon a quote from the final pages of Eduardo Galeano's 1974 book *Open Views of Latin America*. "Underdevelopment, isn't a stage of development, but its consequence. Latin America's underdevelopment arises from

external development, and continues to feed it.... It pretends to be destiny and would like to be thought eternal” (Galeano, 1974, p. 285). These words and the statements from Indigenous Maya leaders have inspired me to think critically about the development I knew before embarking on a journey to Guatemala. This is what academia is about. If I were asked a year ago what I thought about ‘development’ as it is applied by the Global North to the Global South, my answer would have come from the depths of my textbooks. Scholars should be encouraged to challenge preconceived notions and to think critically about the world around them. I will continue to ‘unlearn’ and re-think the complexities of ‘development’ as I am convinced scholarly contributions will further Indigenous and activists’ movements. More importantly, by challenging the systems of ‘development,’ I know communities will achieve their visions of life.

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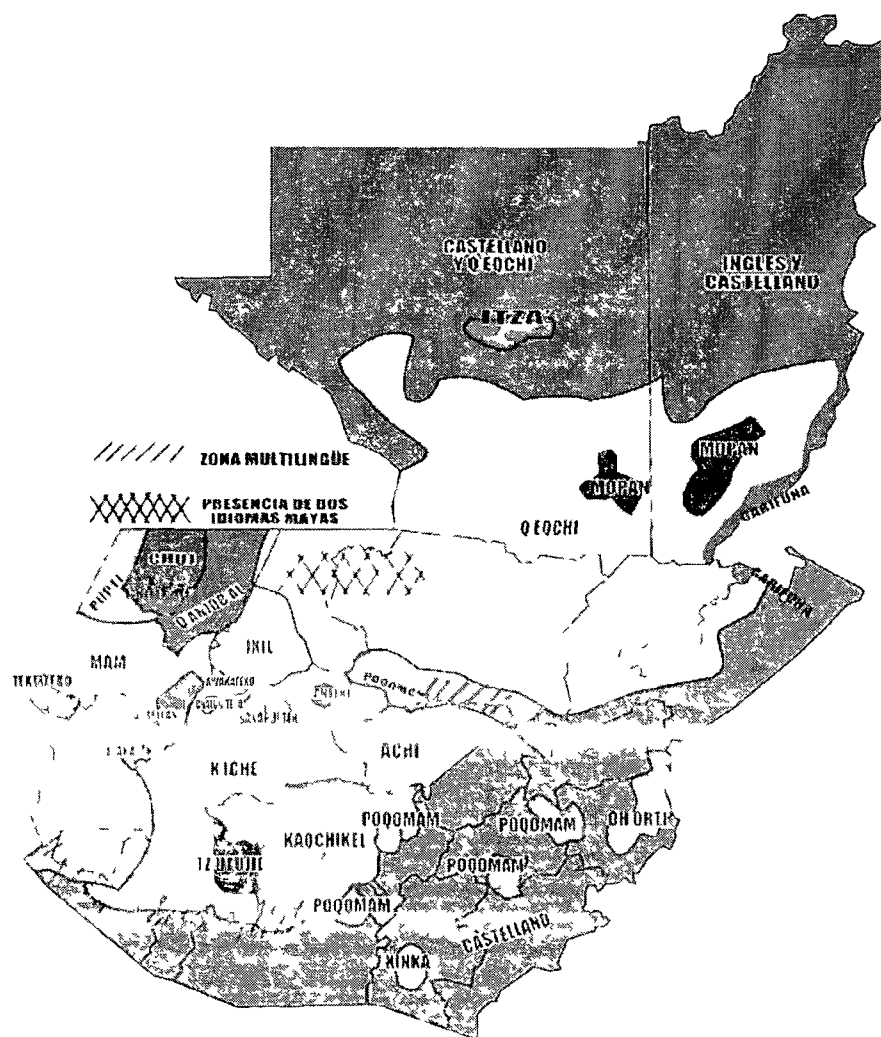
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Appendices

Appendix A



K'ULB'IL YOL TWITZ PAXIL ACADEMIA DE LENGUAS MAYAS DE GUATEMALA



Source: Academia de Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala, 2010

Quiché, or *K'iche*, is one of 22 traditional languages in Guatemala (Little & Smith, 2009)

Appendix B

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD

MEMORANDUM

To: Alexandra Pederson
CC: Dr. Catherine Nolin

From: Henry Harder, Chair
Research Ethics Board

Date: September 7, 2010

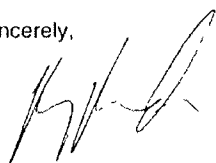
Re: **E2010.0816.117**
What is Good Development? Conflicting Views in the Quiché Region of Guatemala

Thank you for submitting the above-noted proposal and requested amendments to the Research Ethics Board. Your proposal has now been approved.

We are pleased to issue approval for the above named study for a period of 12 months from the date of this letter. Continuation beyond that date will require further review and renewal of REB approval. Any changes or amendments to the protocol or consent form must be approved by the Research Ethics Board.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,



Henry Harder

Appendix C

Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form **What is Development? Conflicting Views in the Quiché Region of Guatemala**

Principle Investigator: Alexandra Pedersen, student for Masters of Arts in the International Development Program, International Studies Department, University of Northern British Columbia

Funding: University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), Canada

Objectives: You are being invited to participate in a research study that examines the perspectives of development applied in the South. Specifically, the objective of this research study seeks to understand the perspectives of the Indigenous Mayan communities and the impacts of imposed development project on Indigenous communities. You have been invited to participate in this study, because you are a leader in the Indigenous Maya community, and can provide testimony that may best reflect other members of the community.

The study entitled “What is Good Development? Conflicting Views in the Quiché Region of Guatemala” is being conducted by Alexandra Pedersen, a Master’s student at the University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, British Columbia, Canada. Alexandra is conducting this research study with the support of the University. Information obtained in this study will inform future researchers and aid development practitioners in their understanding of development from the North/South perspective. The study will examine how development projects are viewed by the Indigenous Maya communities of El Quiché, Guatemala, and what their perspectives of “good” development are in comparison. The study will also seek to understand the political atmosphere among the Indigenous Maya communities and their opposition to the prevalent economic development model imposed by institutions and governments in the North.

Procedures: You are being asked to participate in an individual interview with Alexandra Pedersen and either Reverend Emilie Smith or fellow UNBC graduate student JP LaPlante, who will act as translators. Pre-determined questions will guide the interview, but you are free to expand beyond the questions if it relates to a greater understanding of the issues presented. There is no determined length of the interview, how long the interview lasts depends on your availability and the amount of time it takes to share your experiences on behalf of your community.

Questions will be asked about your experiences with development in your community. You will be asked your perspectives as well as your community’s perspective on what development is, and what it means to you. You will also be asked what the Mayan vision of development is. Questions will be asked about opposing views of development that are present in your community. You will be asked to identify organizations/governments/institutions that present a vision of development that may be different from your own, or that of your community. You will be asked questions about

how development from these organizations/governments/institutions has impacted you and your community. You will be asked if your community has participated in a *consulta* and if the Guatemalan government has acknowledged your visions of development. Finally, you will also be asked to speculate how your community would be different if development was not attempted through Megaprojects or Mining.

The interview will be scheduled at a time that is convenient for you and the interviewer, Alexandra Pedersen. The interviewer will ask your permission to video record, audio record the conversation to ensure that everything you say is accurately obtained. You will only be asked to participate in one interview. Transcripts or digital copies of the interview are available upon request.

Confidentiality: If you choose, you may be identified in the research results and later distribution of the results. However, if you wish to remain anonymous, then no identifying information will be recorded. If identifying information is recorded it will immediately be deleted. If you would like, you may choose your own pseudonym for this research study. Also, you may request a copy of the digital recording. All digital recordings, transcripts, names and information will be kept confidential, under lock and key for 5 years at the University of Northern British Columbia.

Risks and Benefits: The goal of this research project is to provide information for development practitioners on the current development process. Your community will benefit by sharing this information with development practitioners in both the North and South in order to better suit your community's needs. However, participants must be warned that they may experience feelings of emotional distress as they are asked questions about sensitive issues involving the participant and their community. If this happens, the interviewer will ask if you wish to continue. You may stop the interview at any point.

Participation is Voluntary: You do not have to participate in this research study. You may refuse to answer any of the questions. You may also stop the interview at any point, and the information you provided up to that point will be deleted. You may also request to have a copy of the digital recording or transcript at any time.

Compensation: Your time is greatly appreciated. You will be offered to have your transportation costs to Peace House compensated for participating in this research study. You will receive a signed copy of this document to keep for future reference. Alexandra Pedersen can be contacted confidentially, at any time, by calling 001-250-964-2603 or by email at peders8@unbc.ca.

Upon completion of this study, you will receive a copy of the research results, the thesis and any subsequent publications. Delivered of these documents will be made by either Alexandra Pedersen, or a colleague she entrusts to deliver the publications.

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of the study, please feel free to contact the University of Northern British Columbia's Office of Research at 001-250-906-5650 or via email at reb@unbc.ca.

Consent:

I hereby understand the nature of this information sheet, and consent form as explained by Alexandra Pedersen and translated by Reverend Emilie Smith/JP Laplante. I agree to participate in this study.

X _____/2010
Name and Date

I, the undersigned, have fully explained the study to the above named person.

X _____/2010
Signature of Principal Researcher
Print Name and Date

Consent Form In Spanish

Hoja de informacion y petición de permiso para participantes

¿Que significa desarrollo? Visiones variantes en la región Quiché de Guatemala

Investigadora Principal: Alexandra Pedersen, estudiante, Maestria en artes en el Programa de Desarrollo Internacional, Departamento de Estudios Internacionales, Universidad del Norte de la Colombia Britanica (Canadá) (UNBC)

Financiamiento: UNBC, Canadá

Objetivos: Ha sido invitado a participar en una investigación que va a explorar las perspectivas sobre el desarrollo, desde el Sur. Específicamente, el objetivo de este estudio busca entender las perspectivas de las comunidades indígenas Maya y los impactos de proyectos impuestos en sus comunidades. Ha sido invitado a participar en este investigación, porque usted es un lider en la comunidad indígena Maya, y puede proveer testimonio que puede reflejar mejor otros miembros de la comunidad.

“¿Que es el buen desarrollo? Visiones variantes en la región Quiché de Guatemala” está siendo conducido por Alexandra Pedersen, una estudiante de maestria de la Universidad del Norte de la Colombia Britanica, situado en la ciudad de Prince George, Colombia Britanica, Canadá. Alexandra está conduciendo este investigación con el apoyo de la Universidad. Información obtenido en este estudio informará a futuros investigadores y asistirá a los practicantes de desarrollo en su entendimiento de desarrollo desde la perspectiva norte-sur. Este estudio examinará como proyectos de desarrollo son vistos por las comunidades indigena Maya en El Quiché, Guatemala. Además, el estudio intentará entender el ambiente políticaentre las comunidades indígena Maya y so oposición al model del desarrollo económico prevalente impuesto por las instituciones y gobiernos del Norte.

Procedimientos: Ha sido invidado participar en una entrevista individual con Alexandra Pederson y bien la Reverenda Emilie Smith o tambien estudiante de pos-grado de la UNBC Juan Pablo LaPlante, quienes serán los traductores. Preguntas pre-determinadas guiará la entrevista, pero está libre a expandir mas allá de las preguntas si llega a un mayor entendimiento de las temas presentadas. No hay un tiempo pre-determinada a la entrevista, el tiempo depende se su disponibilidad y el tiempo que requiere a compartir sus experiencias en comunidad.

Las preguntas será sobre sus experiencias con desarrollo en su comunidad. Se preguntará por sus perspectivas, y tambien la de su comunida sobre que es el desarrollo, y que significa para ti. Tambien se preguntará cual sera una vision Maya del desarrollo. Se preguntará sobre visiones opuestas que estarán presente en su comunidad. Le preguntará cuales son los organizaciones, gobiernos e instituciones que presentan una vision del desarrollo que será diferente que la suya o la de la comunidad. Se preguntará sobre como

desarrollo de estas organizaciones, gobiernos e instituciones ha impactado usted y su comunidad. Se preguntará si su comunidad ha participado en una consulta comunitaria, y si el gobierno de Guatemala ha reconocido su visión del desarrollo. Finalmente, se preguntará una especulación sobre cómo sería diferente su comunidad si el desarrollo fuera por otro camino y no por los megaproyectos y la minería.

La entrevista sería organizada en un tiempo que sería conveniente para usted, y la conductora de la entrevista, Alexandra Pedersen. Alexandra le pedirá permiso a grabar, por video y grabadora, la conversación, para asegurar que todo que usted dice está captado bien. Sería solo una entrevista a que le pedirá. Transcripts o versiones electrónicas de la entrevista, será disponible a la petición suya.

Confidencialidad: Si usted desea puede ser identificado en los resultados de este investigación, y la distribución de la información. Mas embargo, si usted desea la anonimidad, no información de identificación sería gravado. Si información de su identidad es gravado, será borrado de inmediato. Si desea puede escoger usted mismo una seudónimo para este investigación. Además puede pedir una copia de la grabación digital. Todos las grabaciones digitales, transcripts, nombres e información sera confidencial, y guardado bajo llave por cinco años en la UNBC.

Riesgos y beneficios: El objetivo de este proyecto de investigación es a proveer información a practicantes de desarrollo sobre el actual proceso de desarrollo. Su comunidad beneficiará en compartir este informaciones con los practicantes de desarrollo tanto en el Norte que en el Sur para mejorar la forma de atender a las necesidades de su comunidad. Sin embargo se debe advertir que participantes puede experimentar fuertes sentidos de incomodidad si están recibiendo preguntas sobre temas delicadas que le toca a ellos, o a sus comunidades. Si esto llega a pasar, la conductora de la entrevista le preguntará si quiere seguir. Se puede parrar la entrevista en cualquier momento.

Participación es de forma voluntaria: No está obligado a participar en este investigación. Tiene derecho de no contestar a cualquiera de las preguntas. Puede parrar la entrevista en cualquier momento, y si desea, la información ya grabada, sería borrada. Puede pedir una copia de la grabada digital o un transcripto en cualquier momento.

Compensación: Agradecemos mucho su aportación de tiempo. Sería recompensado por cualquier gasto que tiene de transporte a la Casa de la red de la vida para participar en este estudio. Recibirá una copia del documento, firmado, para guardar por referencia en el futuro. Alexandra Pedersen puede ser contactada confidencialmente, en cualquier momento. Su telefono: 001 250 964-2603, o por email a: peders8@unbc.ca

Cuando esta terminada este estudio, recibirá una copia de los resultados de la investigación, el tesis, y cualquier publicación en el futuro. La entrega de estos documentos sera por Alexandra Pedersen, o un colega de confianza para hacer llegar los publicaciones.

Si tiene cualquier pregunta o preocupación sobre sus derechos como participante de este investigación o por la conducta de el estudio, favor de contactarse con la Universidad del Norte de la Colombia Britanica, Oficina de Investigaciones a 001 250 906-5650, o por email a: reb@unbc.ca

Appendix D

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

The following outline shows potential questions that may be asked in each interview

- 1 What does development mean to you?
- 2 What is your community's vision of development?
- 3 Is there a Mayan vision of development?
 - a What does this vision of development look like?
 - b What are the characteristics of development from this perspective?
- 4 Are there competing forms of development in your community/region?
 - a In your opinion, what is this vision of development? How is it represented? (i.e. Megaproject/Mining Company/NGO)
 - b How does this vision differ from the vision your community holds?
- 5 Are there other corporations/organizations/institutions in the area that hold similar or different views of development than your own?
- 6 Do you feel that development from these institutions/corporations is in your best interests? If not, who do they best benefit?
- 7 What are the impacts of imposed development on your community?
- 8 Has your community resisted any imposed forms of development?
 - a If so, by who? How? Can you talk about these successes/failures?
- 9 What do you hope to achieve by resisting?
- 10 Have you or your community participated in a *consulta*? If so, what was the overall result?
- 11 Does the Guatemalan government acknowledge or support your community in their visions of development? If so, how do they acknowledge your community?
- 12 How would the region be different if the Megaproject/Mine shut down?

Semi-Structured Interview Questions in Spanish

Posibles Preguntas para la entrevista
2010

Agosto/Septiembre

Alexandra Pedersen

El siguiente borrador muestra posibles preguntas que puede ser usados en cada entrevista

1. ¿Para usted, que significa el desarrollo?
2. ¿Cual seria la visión de su comunidad de desarrollo?
3. ¿Hay un concepto Maya de desarrollo?
 - a. ¿como se describirá este visión de desarrollo?
 - b. ¿cuales son las características de desarrollo visto desde esta perspectiva?
4. ¿Hay modelos de desarrollo en conflicto en su comunidad, región?
 - a. En su opinión, cual sería un modelo de desarrollo en conflicto con la comunidad? ¿Como se presenta esto? (por ejemplo: megaproyecto/minería/ONG)
 - b. ¿como varía esta visión de la que mantiene su comunidad?
5. ¿Hay corporaciones/organizaciones/instituciones en su región que mantienen similar o diferentes visiones de desarrollo de la suya?
6. ¿Crea usted que desarrollo desde estas instituciones/corporaciones es un su interés? Sí no, quien crea usted beneficiará más?
7. ¿Cuales son los impactos de un desarrollo impuesto en su comunidad?
8. ¿Su comunidad ha resistido algunas formas de desarrollo impuesto?
 - a. Sí su respuesta es si, ¿quienes fueron? ¿y como? ¿puede hablar de los éxitos y fracasos que han habido?
9. ¿Que esperar ganar en resistir?
10. ¿Han ustedes o su comunidad participado en una consulta comunitaria? Sí su respuesta es si, ¿cual fue el resultado a fin de cuenta?
11. ¿El gobierno de Guatemala reconoce o apoya su comunidad en su visión de desarrollo? Sí su respuesta es si, ¿como reconocen a su comunidad?
12. ¿Como sería la región de diferente si se parara el megaproyecto o la minera?